November/December 2003 ISSUE

Business Profile
2 Midtown Harrisburg Bookstores Open
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Alternative CENTRAL

A PUBLICATION FOR CENTRAL PA'S LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY.

Economic Development's Secret Weapon - Gay People

by Ted S. Martin

What a difference a gay makes. At least when it comes to prosperous cities and vital urban neighborhoods.

So claims Carnegie Mellon University professor, Richard Florida, in his best-selling and award-winning book "The Rise of the Creative Class." For Florida, it's not casino gambling, sports complexes, or airports that revitalize depressed cities. Simply put, it is large concentrations of gay couples. Why? Because they lure creative people of every sexual persuasion into new regions. Other creative people then take a chance on a region because gays folks have initially taken the plunge.

Florida claims that cities where businesses flourish have high percentages of gay couples. Conversely, places like Pittsburgh and Buffalo, with low percentages of gay couples living within their boundaries, continue to bleed population. They no longer merit their decade-old label touted by economic developers as "hot" investment locations.

By comparison to Pittsburgh and Buffalo, 16 Pennsylvania Fortune 500, Fortune 200 or companies with more than 500 employees are rated on a "gay-friendly" index by the Human Rights Campaign, a Washington, DC-based gay lobby. With 100 a perfect score, their rankings vary from 14 to 86 in a list of 250 rated companies averaging a score of 71. The high Pennsylvania scorers are Cigna Corp. (Phila.), 86; Lincoln National Corp. (Phila.), 86; Mellon Financial Corp. (Pitts.), 86; Unisys Corp. (Blue Bell), 86; Air Products & Chemicals Inc. (Allentown), 71.

"The key to understanding America's technological and economic vibrancy lies in our openness to new people and ideas," Florida told *USA Today* on his book tour. "Tolerance of immigrants, gays and other minorities is much more important to sustained economic growth and high-paying jobs than the tax cut President Bush has in mind." For example, 88 percent of Americans will save less than $100 on their 2006 federal taxes as a result of this year's tax cuts, according to Harper's Index. The average amount these taxpayers will save is $4.00.

By associating gays with "creativity," some accuse Florida of trafficking in stereotypes. He counters that charge by saying "creative, innovative and entrepreneurial activities tend to flourish in the same kinds of places that

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Tameca Waid and Monique Pearson, co-owners and partners, recently opened "Forever Books"-page 16, the region's only gay and lesbian bookstore, 41 N. Front Street, Steelton (939-5507). They launch Alternative Central's new Book Review Section in this issue.-page 15

'Tis the Season to Give... to LGBT Organizations

by Lisa Granite

There's a certain level of insanity needed to navigate the holidays. Most of us are probably already there. Although the media portrays the warm fuzzy aspects, we know the brutal truth: Chaos reigns between November and January.

Among the 100 items on your to-do list is an overwhelming task that never seems to get accomplished - making a donation to a nonprofit organization. You want to do it; you know you should do it, but you just need a little direction.

Luckily for you, our community is already on top of things. There are many lgbt nonprofit organizations in central Pennsylvania doing lots of good each day. They offer support to youth and their families. They help people infected with HIV get counseling and employment training. They even assist those looking for faith communities.

So your task is not as overwhelming as it first seemed. To get you started, *Alternative Central*

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Alternative Central Hangs with Warhol Clan

by Frank Pizzoli

Right before this issue hit the press, *Alternative Central* (*AC*) hung out with James (Jamie) Warhola, nephew of Andy Warhol, for his Philadelphia book signing and art show at the Da Vinci Art Alliance on Catherine Street.

Himself a successful artist, Jamie spent lots of time with his pop art icon uncle, whom he remembers in his new children's book "Uncle Andy's: A Faabbbulous Visit with Andy Warhol." Swells of book buyers showed up to buy copies and to see the original art works illustrating the book.

The illustrated children's book also fills in interesting blanks for adults curious about

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SPARC Holds Fifth Conference

The Statewide Pennsylvania Rights Coalition (SPARC) held its fifth conference Oct. 25-26 with the theme of "Now is the Time: The Future of LGBT Rights in Pennsylvania." Harrisburg Hilton and Towers served as the host hotel.

The conference goal is to provide citizens of the state the opportunity to network, learn, celebrate, and empower one another to work together to transform the hostile climate in Pennsylvania directed at sexual minorities.

This was accomplished through panels and discussion of the proposed antidiscrimination laws currently in deliberation in the Pennsylvania legislature, diversity, media relations and empowerment.

"SPARC's annual conference is the best opportunity in Pennsylvania for activists of all ages to come together in a safe environment to learn, to listen and to support one another in our wide ranging efforts to achieve equality and social justice," said Stephen Glassman, SPARC co-chair and chairperson of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

Billy Hileman, publisher of

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Family Flag Project Now Performance Piece

The Family Flag Project recently announced that it will receive a grant from The Jump Street/ Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Program. This grant money will develop a performance art piece based on the more than 300 stories collected by the project.

"I'm excited to be given the opportunity to take the amazing stories of strength and hope that have been shared with me, and share them to create a deeper level of understanding about the LGBT community," said Jennifer Storm, Family Flag Project founder.

The performance art piece will bring to life the triumphs and tribulations of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community as they have been expressed and shared with The Family Flag Project over the past two years. The piece will be developed and presented over the next year and will travel throughout the state and across the nation.

The Family Flag Project was originally created to offer a creative outlet for people to channel their stories, energy and

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Jennifer Storm, Family Flag Project founder, shown here with a small portion of the flag, says she's excited about the opportunity work with the amazing stories of strength and hope that people have shared with her.

Yawana Wilmer
House Manages Strand-Capitol
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Parev's Patrick Desneiges
Values Gay Community
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Capital BlueCross Pops

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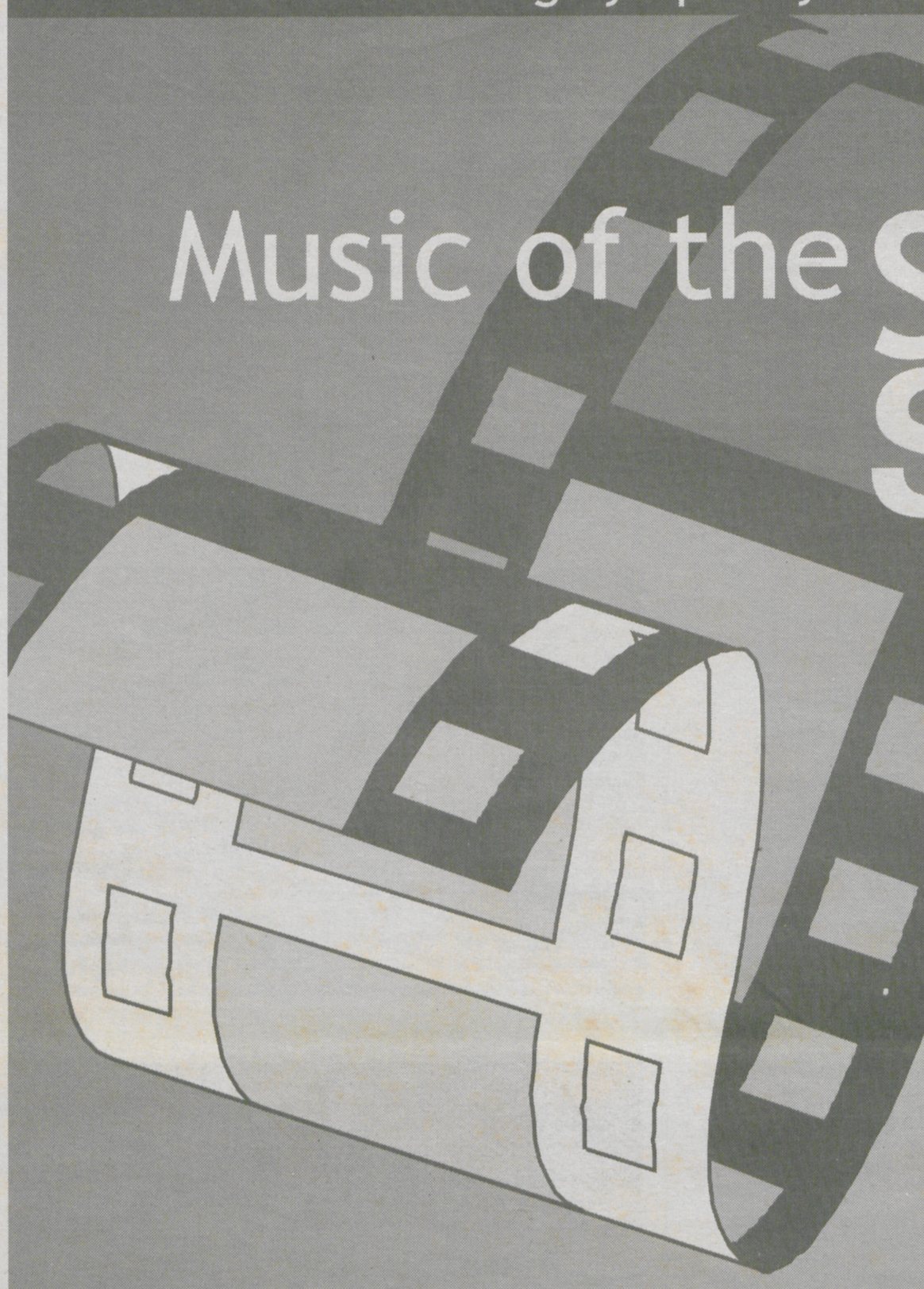

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137 golfers participated in the 3rd Annual Pink Lizard's Golf Tournament held recently at the Silver Spring Golf Course in Mechanicsburg to benefit the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Pink Lizard owner Marcia Greise organized the event. EDS was the corporate sponsor.
Photo by Andrew S. Walker

Economic Development continued

attract gays and others outside the norm."

Florida continues his argument by explaining that "talented people seek an environment open to differences. Many highly creative people, regardless of ethnic background or sexual orientation, grew up feeling like outsiders, different in some way from most of their schoolmates." He says when creative people in general, and gay and lesbian people in particular, size up new companies and communities, they see acceptance of diversity and gays as a bright sign signaling "non-standard people welcome here."

If gays and lesbians feel comfortable in a place, then almost anyone will, Florida says.

"A place where it's OK for men to walk down the street holding hands," he writes, "will probably also be a place where Indian engineers, tattooed software geeks and foreign-born entrepreneurs feel at home." That means this area's soon-to-be-opened Harrisburg University of Science and Technology could, in its own way, support and improve the lives of central Pennsylvania's gay community, not to mention what the gay community could bring to the new educational enterprise.

People with creativity and skills are vital to any economy. In central Pennsylvania, for example, EDS will soon take over technology services at York International under a $426 million, 10-year agreement. The two Fortune 500 companies will cooperate to form a global networking system to manage York International projects. This merger will create about 125 jobs.

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Alternative CENTRAL

The mission of Alternative Central (AC) is to promote greater understanding and acceptance of central Pennsylvania's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community in their fight for basic rights. AC will provide a positive voice for the thousands of tax-paying, hard-working LGBT citizens who routinely make valuable contributions to the state's continued economic development and who regularly participate in many charitable endeavors within the greater community.

AC is published by the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg, Inc, a non-profit organization, and is the number

one source on information and community events for the central Pennsylvania gay and lesbian community. AC is published bimonthly and distributed throughout the central PA LGBT community and to organizations and newcomers to the area.

Alternative Central (AC) reserves the right to accept, reject or edit any submission. Any names, business, advertiser or source upon appearing in this publication is not to be construed as homosexual. Although AC is supported by many advertisers, we can not accept responsibility for claims made by advertisers.

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Letter from the Publisher & Editor

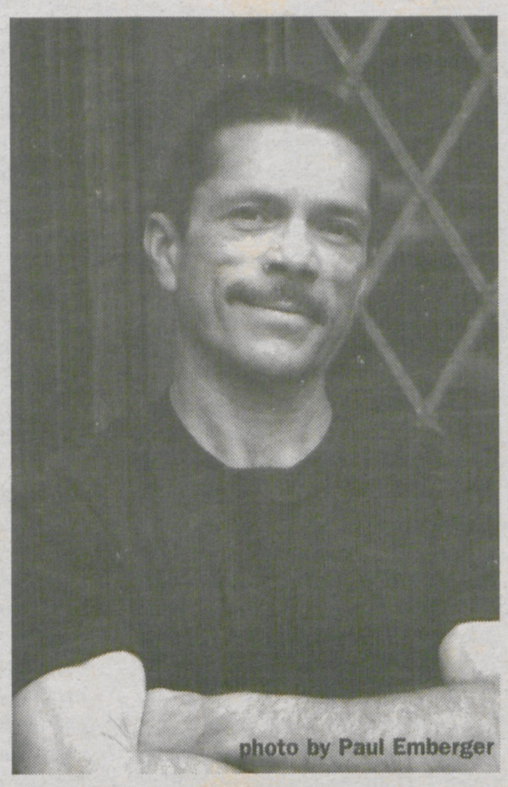
photo by Paul Emberger

Writer Mary McLeod Bethune wrote: "As I give, I get." So it is with many LBGT and related volunteer organizations working diligently all year long giving back to our own and the larger community.

In this issue Lisa Granite reports on several groups that quietly labor taking care of others. The next time some wacko group screams about "the homosexual agenda," think about Granite's story and take comfort in knowing that legions from our ranks quietly give so much, so willingly, so often.

Speaking of giving, Alternative Central's editorial staff volunteers their time and skills. Granite brings hard-edged reporting skills. Former newspaper reporter Michael Chapaloney brings his nose for news and feature to our pages.

Ted Martin brings his savvy point of view on how the larger culture sees us, our money and our skills.

Derek Cordier is always cutting-edge with his legal insights. This issue, he writes about the importance of wills and other vital documents.

Reader Edie Kelly shares her experiences in this issue with raising a teenage daughter. Researcher Ron Melusky is a wizard at finding the salient facts.

Writing for GayHealth.com, Kate Broun, Manager of PapScreen Victoria, talks about the fact that women who have sex with women are not informed about HPV and cervical cancer risks. We also offer information on the third National Lesbian Health Conference Abstracts "Working Together to Create Healthy Lives 2004".

Our News Notes section takes readers to Lehigh Valley, Wilkes Barre, Pittsburgh, California and New York City. We're here, we're queer, get over it.

Anyone willing to make a commitment and keep it in a timely manner is welcome to join the party: write articles, suggest articles, deliver issues, suggest advertisers. Buy a subscription. Contact me directly at PosOps@aol.com. Getting involved is that simple.

Frank Pizzoli
Publisher & Editor

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Just wanted to say BRAVO!!! on Alternative Central, very well done and long needed. We have needed a paper like this for the area for a very long time.

I am also pleased to see Frank Pizzoli is consulting publisher and editor. I have followed his work in MODE and CityBeat. I have always been a fan of his excellent and well written articles.

Keep up the good work. And thank you.

Sincerely,
Jimmy Littlefield

'Tis the Season continued

provides a short list of the organizations in our area needing help. All you have to do is read the list and get in touch with one of them. See? It's easy.

Take a moment out of your whirlwind day and give whatever you can.

Common Roads

Common Roads (CR) supports and enhances the physical and emotional well being of lgbtq youth in central Pennsylvania. Located in Harrisburg, CR is a safe and confidential space for youth to meet. The youth group meets every Friday night and CR's doors are open every day.

CR also works to educate the greater community about gay-related issues, especially those who are involved with our young people. Parents, teachers and counselors all need to understand and recognize how to deal with gay youth; CR provides programs that facilitate

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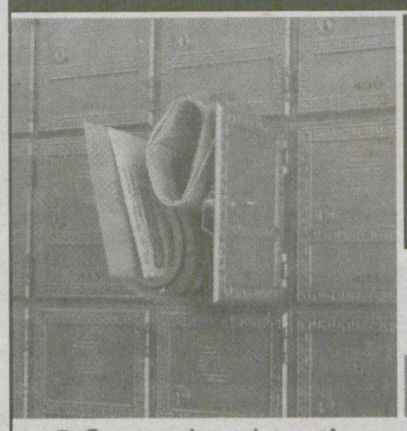

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Parev Service is Exquisite

Gay Community Part of Patron Base

Myths and misunderstandings swirl around gay and lesbian folks. They also swirl surround Parev, a jewel of a restaurant on Pine Street, Harrisburg.

The obvious misconception is that the establishment is a "private club."

"We're a private club Monday through Friday during the daytime. From 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, we're open to the public," says executive general manager Patrick Desneiges.

An electronics engineer by training, Desneiges has led an eclectic life, having worked in international trade traveling from Moscow to Cape Town and for the French banking system before it was nationalized in the early 1980s under President Francois Mitterrand. Undaunted, he opened Parev the month following 9/11 amidst market confusion, talk of war and a ruined Wall Street.

The next myth swirling around Parev is that the place is too expensive for ordinary diners.

"We have a prix fixe, four-course dinner for $35 Monday through Thursday. The best deal in town," Desneiges said. Suits, ties and jackets are never required at Parev. "We host black tie folks out after a formal event and guests in casual wear. We don't request that diners dress in a certain way. We just enjoy nice people," he said, laughing.

He also points out that during weekday happy hour, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., his kitchen offers bar food in the form of "Tartines" for $1.75 per plate. Examples of the changing, tasty dishes are made of tomato and fresh mint, brie and prosciutto, olive mix, and fruit tart. "A couple of Tartines and a glass of wine make for a nice early treat or even dinner."

If these prices aren't reasonable enough for you, how about Parev's Friday and Saturday night choice of a four-, five- or six-course dinner selected from the main menu at $44, $49 and $55 respectively? Desneiges even has an arrangement with Theater Harrisburg for a $57 diner and a show at Whitaker Center. "We're flexible. People come in, have dinner, leave to watch the show, then return for dessert," he said of the popular evening deal.

If music piques your appetite, Parev offers jazz on Friday and Saturday, 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., and "Happy Hour Jazz Jamming" sessions on Wednesday night, 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

All Parev's food is made from scratch. "No flour, corn starch, no heavy cream in the sauces; all fresh seasonal herbs and ingredients, unique spices. All sauces are made from reduction of our own stocks. Nothing from my kitchen is premixed. No short cuts," Desneiges said proudly. From cozy banquets and tables, diners can see the chef's staff in action through huge plate glass windows displaying the kitchen staff's delicate work.

There's also a misconception about Parev's wine list. One does not have to be Donald Trump to enjoy its offerings.

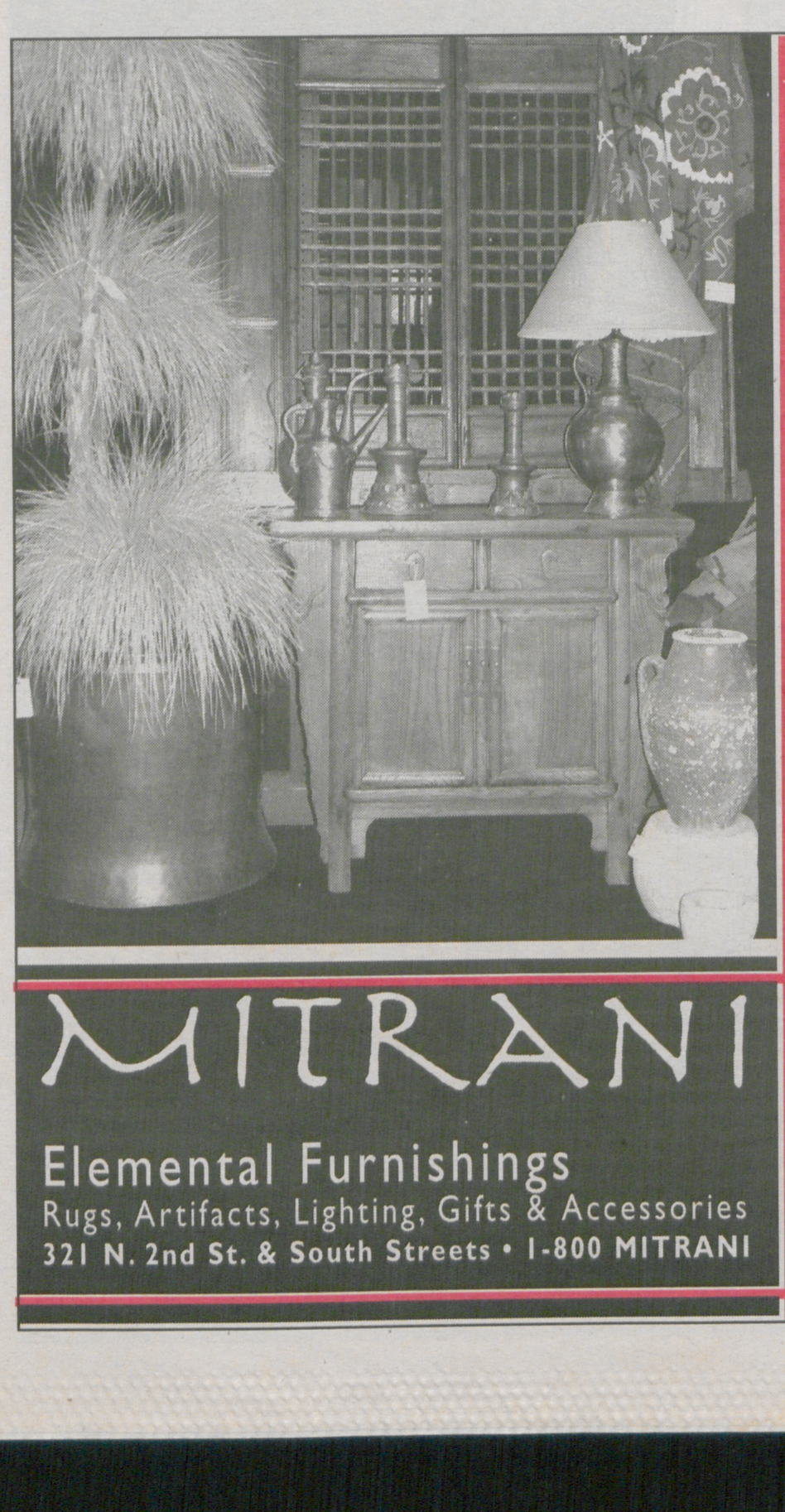
"We have wines from $19 a bottle and up," Desneiges says. He also offers at reasonable prices ($6.50) wines by the glass and "flights" at $12: a good way to discover three different wines with generous pouring. "Churchill's Tavern," his wine cellar, offers 26 wines between $20-$29 a bottle; a selection of 680 different wines or vintages from 18 different parts of the world. And you will be able to discover wines not usually available elsewhere. They even have a smoking room.

Desneiges is subtle but fiercely informed on wines. "We seat guests for a $35 weekday diner or a weekend prix fixe diner. I appear at their table to answer questions on wine," he said with delight and the gleaming eyes of a man who truly loves being of service to guests. His standard questions are: "Red or white? Where do you want to be (showing the price column)? Big, bold taste or elegant and delicate? What are you eating?" It's that simple. No one is made to feel embarrassed by any question. The wine list is organized by price, by region, by type of wine. No hunting for selections; just ask Desneiges.

If readers are interested in a membership to the "day side," called The Tuesday Club, there's a nice discount for members of Harrisburg Young Professionals (HYP). "We offer a $100 annual member ship to HYP members with a $45 monthly minimum spending requirement," Desneiges said. His spending policy is very liberal — anything, food, bar bill, whatever.

Membership allows for use of 21st century meeting spaces hidden in the facility. "I can do legal depositions and teleconferences in a private setting at no cost to members except the communications hook up fee. We have all the latest equipment offered free as a membership benefit," Desneiges noted. One upstairs space offers seating for 165. Another smaller space has a classy "buzzer system" to signal wait staff for those posh, smaller gatherings. There is never a fee for use of meeting space for members.

Like its Armenian name suggests: "a bountiful harvest," Parev is indeed a cornucopia.



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Why a Will is a Must:

Important Documents for LGBTs

By Derek J. Cordier, Esq.

Here are the basics. Wills — if you die without a will or a spouse in Pennsylvania, your estate passes to your children. If you do not have children, your estate passes to your parents, then to your brothers and sisters or their children. Your grandparents are next, and then on down the family line until your estate goes to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Who the administrator of your estate will be is also governed by state law.

If you have a partner and die without a will, the partner may not only end up with nothing, but may have to go to court to prove ownership of what was rightfully his or hers. If you have minor children, a court may appoint a guardian that may not be the person you hoped to raise them. Even with a small estate a will is important; if you die in an accident because of negligence, the person named in your will could benefit from an award or settlement. Larger estates should utilize estate planning to make sure that they are not taxed more than the law requires. Another consideration is funeral arrangements. If you do not leave specific instructions as to your wishes, those closest to you may not have any rights to your remains and could even be barred from the funeral. A will can prove your intent to choose someone other than your next of kin to have rights to your remains. (Next of kin have those rights by state law).

Two documents that allow you to decide who makes health care decisions when you are incapacitated are the power of attorney for health care and the living will. Without a power of attorney for health care, those closest to you may not only be barred from making medical decisions, but may be barred from the hospital as well. However, a power of attorney for health care does not necessarily allow those closest to you to stop life support so a living will, called an advanced directive for health care, is needed to carry out those wishes. It is also recommended that you carry a medical identification card that simply states who to contact in case of an emergency.

Another important document is the power of attorney for finances, which allows someone else to make financial decisions for you, including making payments and writing checks. Basically, with this document anything you do financially can also be accomplished by the person you appoint. This power is especially important if you become incapacitated. However, this power can be designed to be broad or specific, such as simply allowing the transfer of an automobile.

All of these documents are very inexpensive considering the rights they convey and the peace of mind they give. A simple will should not cost more that $100 and the power of attorney for health care, living will and power of attorney for finances should be less than that. You can get these in kits over the Internet, but they are not recommended — especially the powers of attorney, as Pennsylvania has specific notice requirements. Also, using an attorney will help ensure that the documents are correct.

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Preserve CD4 Cells with Lower Viral Load

By Frank Pizzoli

Ever hit a restaurant with menus bigger than your apartment? You need food, but the choices are staggering. HIV meds are similar. Current information empowers consumers to make "informed" choices when choosing HIV medicines.

Know your goal

HIV treatment's ultimate goal is to preserve infection-fighting CD4 T cells by lowering your Viral Load (VL) to an "undetectable" level for as long as possible. Ideally, you want your VL to remain "undetectable," which means there are fewer than "50" virions (that's the virus) per millimeter of blood—the lowest amount blood tests can measure. Below "50", fewer CD4 cells are being attacked by the virus than if VL is higher. Protecting CD4 cells from viral attack is paramount because they fight off nasty, sometimes life threatening, infections.

Know your choices

When choosing combinations of HIV meds remember it's one thing to initially achieve lower VL. It's another to sustain that lowering over time. Although most combinations initially lower VL, some drugs are simply better at keeping VL lower for longer periods of time.

Here's shorthand for the different HIV drug classes from which "combinations" are selected: There are two types of nukes, non-nukes, protease inhibitors, and fusion inhibitors. Combinations should include at least 3 different meds. For initial therapy, the Federal Government recommends certain "preferred" drugs for a combination of either two nukes plus a protease inhibitor or two nukes plus a non-nuke.

In chart form, you'd see 23 choices of medicine made from 19 different compounds. The additional choices are actually combinations of two or three of the 19 compounds. Although there are 23 meds, the number of effective combinations that you can choose is limited. Therefore, you'll want to choose medicines that will not only reach your goal of undetectable as fast as possible, but that will keep HIV as low as possible for as long as possible. That's also exactly what the new Federal Guidelines stress: "Treatment goals should be maximal and durable suppression of viral load".

Drug interactions

In addition to how well and for how long a combination keeps HIV undetectable, you'll want to consider possible side effects and drug interactions. Because of the way some drugs interact with others, certain HIV meds should never be taken together. In fact, you should make sure your doctor knows everything you're taking, including vitamins and recreational drugs. Interactions are a big deal.

As far as side effects, all HIV meds can cause them. But the fewer and milder the side effects, the better. Keep in mind that this is a very individual thing. Side effects vary from drug to drug, and even among different individuals taking the same drug. So consider your lifestyle. For example, if you have a job where you have to be mentally alert, drugs that make it hard to concentrate may not be right for you.

To lower the number of pills taken daily, called "pill burden," there are HIV meds that combine two three drugs into one pill. This can make adherence more convenient. So can combinations that are taken fewer times during the day. Although dosing convenience is a nice quality in a drug combination—especially once-a-day convenience—it isn't the best or only reason to choose one drug over another. "Convenience" doesn't automatically make a regimen effective at keeping VL low for as long as possible. The true measure of success is how long your VL stays undetectable.

In fact, recent Federal Government Guidelines noted a major concern about once-daily therapy over "the paucity (lack of) of long-term trials with comparison to potent twice daily regimens."

There are also the issues of food requirements. Some HIV drugs have a food requirement which means they are taken with or without food, or with particular types of food. Some drugs have easier food rules than others. For example, some nukes have no food restrictions, but others must be taken with meals. Non-nuke drugs have no restrictions. And depending on the drug, protease inhibitors are taken with or without food.

Some HIV drugs have no food restrictions and are taken at meal time, almost like a built in reminder when to take them. But having to take one drug with food and another without food can be a hassle. With or without food requirements, the main goal is to pick drugs that will keep your VL as low as possible for as long as possible.

Adherence and Resistance

All medicines work to some degree, but only if you take them. Remember being warned to finish all your antibiotics because stopping prematurely allows the rash to return? Same result with HIV drugs, only it's called "resistance".

Resistance to your HIV meds means your drugs can no longer fight off the virus. This can happen if the HIV virus evolves in such a way that it enables new copies of itself to survive in the presence of the drugs you're taking. Missing doses can result in the amount of medicine in your blood dropping below levels needed to control the virus. Uncontrolled, the virus will then be free to invade infection-fighting CD4 cells. As more and more CD4 cells are destroyed, you are much more likely to develop opportunistic infections. This "chain reaction" concerns the Federal Government, which notes that "missing one [once-daily] dose may result in inadequate drug exposure over a defined period of time leading to a higher probability of the development of drug resistance."

To avoid resistance, research indicates HIV drugs must be taken 95 percent of the time. Even if taken 95 percent of the time, some people still develop resistance. And even with less than perfect adherence, resistance doesn't always develop. The point is that some HIV drugs are "more forgiving" and others "less forgiving" if you miss doses. Try to pick drugs with a good track record at keeping HIV undetectable and avoiding resistance.

Convenience isn't efficacy

Whether you're starting HIV therapy for the first time or switching regimens, it's important to choose drug combinations that keep your VL undetectable for as long as possible. And that's regardless of the number of pills required on a daily basis. Of all the factors you'll consider, remember that there's no relationship between the "convenience" of taking fewer pills and their "effectiveness". The fact of the matter is that some drugs are simply better at keeping VL undetectable for the long haul. And of these drugs, there are options. Don't trade off "today convenience" for "tomorrow's effectiveness".

Frank Pizzoli writes for Instinct, POZ, Washington Blade, New York Blade, and founded nonprofit Positive Opportunities (PosOps@aol.com), offering educational seminars and benefits counseling to HIV-infected people supported by Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and Greater Harrisburg Foundation.

Switchboard Needs Telephone Volunteers

The Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg (GLSH) needs a few dependable volunteers to answer the telephone calls made to the Switchboard.

"We get lots of calls for information on the region's lgbt community. We also get calls for help with identifying programs and all sorts of resources," says GLSH chair Charlie Smith.

GLSH has a formal training seminar for volunteers. The switchboard operation, founded in 1976, recently reorganized its training manual and is ready to work with a new crop of volunteers. Four 2004 volunteer training sessions will be available in January, April, August and October and will lasts about two hours.

"It's pretty painless. Volunteers show up at the Center and answer the telephone. Answers to callers' questions are either on our web site, accessible while you're on the telephone or in a manual at your side," Smith says.

GLSH hours are 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday. Interested volunteers are asked to telephone 234-0328 or complete and submit the online volunteer form at: www.askglsh.org/contact/volunteer.htm. Individuals will be contacted by the GLSH volunteer training coordinator. Individuals are requested to complete an application and questionnaire. Qualified individuals will be required to attend the training session and any on-going seminars.

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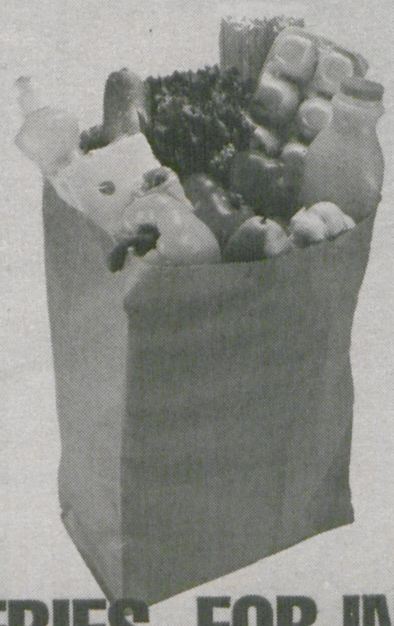

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Lesbian NOTATIONS

High Risk of Heart Disease

by Paula Martinac

Mainstream news programs and publications love to report on medical scares, which make good copy. Because the stories are ubiquitous, the temptation for some of us is to ignore them. But recently, a brief news item did catch my attention: "Lesbians Face Higher Heart Disease Risk." The study it reported on should give the lesbian community important food for thought, but I worry that many of us will simply disregard it.

If some skeptical lesbians dismiss the report, I guess it's understandable. We've gotten stern warnings about our health before that didn't amount to much. In the late '90s, researchers claimed we were at much higher risk for breast cancer than straight women, and our community shot into panic mode. Happily, no lesbian breast cancer epidemic has yet materialized.

But the issues raised by that scare — about lesbians' propensity to smoke, drink and be overweight — continue to crop up. A recent San Francisco-based study about lesbian health, whose results were just released, hypothesizes that our body mass and waist measurements make us prime candidates for cardiovascular disease. In addition, a few months ago the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Research on Health and Sexual Orientation received funding from the National Institutes of Health to do a groundbreaking four-year study on the various risks of heart disease in lesbians.

A lot of us, I think, may end up ignoring such studies. First, for thin lesbians, the San Francisco report's highlighting of body size as a risk factor for heart disease may lead to the false assumption that a person has to be overweight to have a heart attack. In fact, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes, which can lead to heart disease, can plague slim people, too.

Second, some lesbian feminists of size may assume that anyone who puts a negative spin on weight must be buying into male ideas about how women ought to look. Indeed, lesbians in general pride ourselves on being above the fray when it comes to body image; straight women have to worry about things like weight to please men, but not us. All sizes and shapes welcome! That's always been a very positive aspect of the lesbian community, but it could have negative health consequences, too. Besides that, it sometimes leads to an eerie silence in our community about weight concerns.

For example, the last time I wrote a column on weight and health, I got several sanctimonious e-mails from dykes of size who chastised me, a thin woman, for daring to voice an opinion about obesity and problems like heart disease. One reader offered her pity, surmising that I must have really deep-seated body-image problems. And didn't I know that most medical research is controlled by men?

Well, sure. In fact, that's the third and most serious reason why lesbians may fail to heed warnings about heart disease: because heart attacks have been gendered "male" by doctors, who fuel women's cancer fears instead. Even the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association's list of 10 health issues lesbians should discuss with their doctors puts breast cancer first and heart disease last (right after osteoporosis, which is a serious threat to women's health, but not a killer). The fact is, though, that more women die of heart disease than of all forms of cancer combined, including breast cancer.

Consider this personal anecdote: Since the age of 35 I've had more mammograms than I can even remember, based on doctors' recommendations. But I've had to specifically *request* cholesterol tests, whose purpose is to help identify the potential risk for heart disease and stroke.

Much of the medical establishment's de-emphasis of heart disease in women and overemphasis on cancer has its roots in sexism. Our society views breast cancer as particularly frightening, since a woman's loss of a breast to mastectomy is perceived as a diminishing of her femininity and attractiveness. But heart disease is "masculine" because it may be triggered by the stress of work or of worries about supporting a family. The assumption has been that woman don't have the same pressing concerns as men, even though we have jobs, too, and often take care of homes, children or aging parents on top of that. Because of this gross misreading of heart disease, most women never learn until it's too late that our symptoms — nausea, fainting, shortness of breath — are very different from those that men experience.

When it comes to heart disease, then, lesbians have good reasons to keep a close watch on the study findings and ask a lot of questions of our health-care professionals. Among our concerns should be: How do weight and behavior affect our risk for heart disease? Can a thin nonsmoker be at risk? And how can we protect ourselves against this silent killer of women?

(Paula Martinac is a Lambda Literary Award-winning author of seven books and editor in chief of Q Syndicate. She can be reached care of this publication or at PMcolumn@aol.com.)

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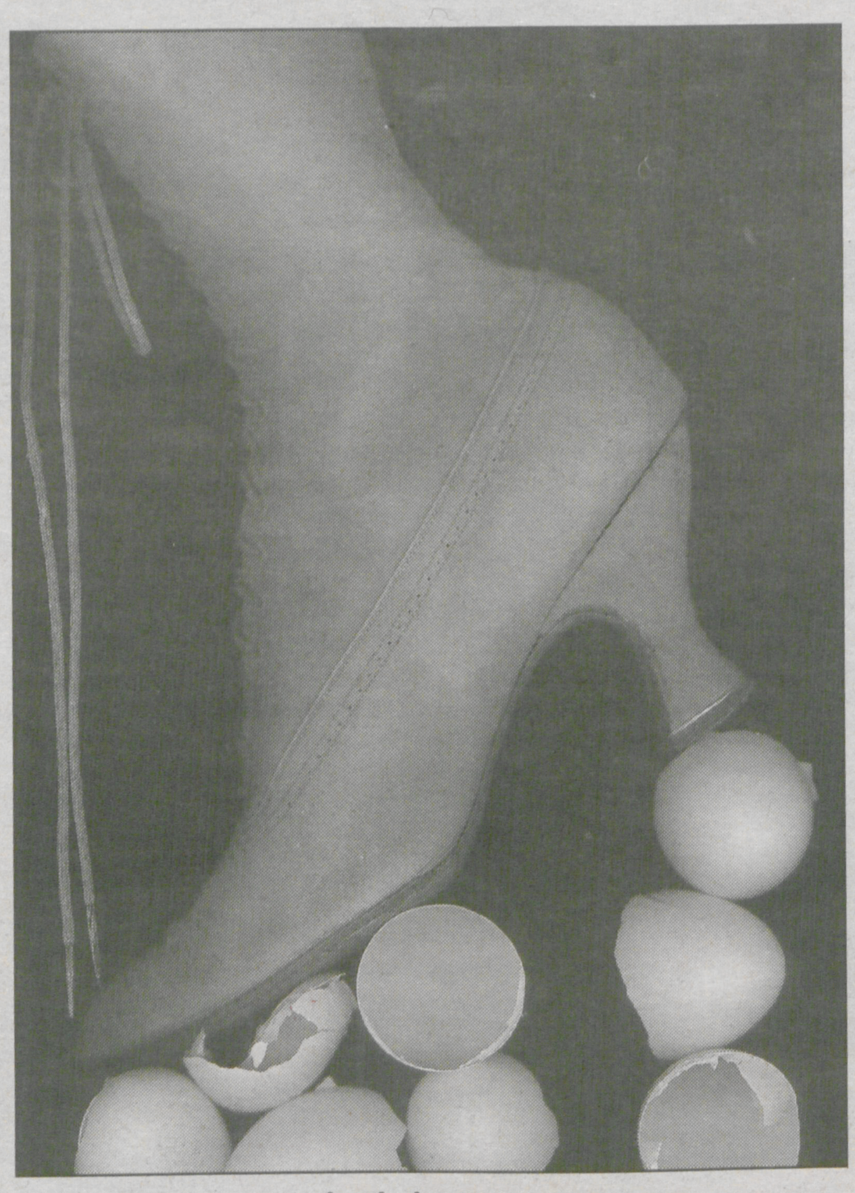

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3rd National Lesbian Health Conference Scheduled

The third National Lesbian Health Conference, entitled "Working Together to Create Healthy Lives 2004" takes place May 19-22, 2004, in Chicago, Ill.

The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Nursing Institute, in conjunction with National Center of Excellence in Women's Health, invites submissions of proposals for symposia, oral and poster sessions and continuing education sessions from lesbian leaders and professionals. The event draws policy makers, educators, community-based health care providers, activists and advocates interested in lesbian health issues.

Lesbian activist interested underserved populations are encouraged to attend. Conference objectives include increasing inclusion of and service to underserved populations within the lesbian community; disseminating information on all aspects of lesbian health; increasing numbers and types of lesbian health services, as well as of lesbian research, programming and organizations; and increasing awareness of lesbian health issues among policymakers, the media, the healthcare community, the LGBTI community and the general public.

Plenary sessions and panel discussion topics will include research methodology, community-based organizations, health centers, women of color, homophobia and health, healthy weight, fundraising, access to care issues, myths and stereotypes in lesbian health, healthy aging, mental health/substance abuse/addictions, and cancer prevention, detection and treatment.

If you have any questions, contact: Carrol Smith (abstract submission), carrols@uic.edu; Michelle Choi, MS, RN (conference coordinator), mchoi7@uic.edu; or Michelle Lewis (events coordinator), 312.355.4431, mjlewis7@uic.edu.

QUEER TV FOR THE STRAIGHT GUY

Lesbians Often Misinformed
About HPV, Cervical Cancer Risk

by GayHealth.com

Women who have sex with women (WSW) are sometimes not informed about their risks for HPV, cervical cancer, and are often told they don't need regular Pap tests, according to a study recently published in the Health Promotion Journal of Australia.

"Among more than 400 lesbians surveyed about their Pap screening behavior, nine percent were told that they didn't need a Pap test," said Cancer Council of Victoria's Adrienne Brown, the study's lead author. "The disturbing thing is that most women who are given this advice - 89 percent - received it from a doctor," said Brown.

Regular Pap screenings can save your life. Early detection is key to fighting cervical cancer. "The reason for alarm is that most women who die from cervical cancer have not had regular Pap tests," according to Kate Broun, Manager of PapScreen Victoria.

HPV does not require penetration to pass between partners, it spreads between sexual partners during close skin to skin contact. Research shows that HPV is transmitted sexually between female partners.

Results from international research suggest that as many as one in five lesbians who have never had sex with men are being infected with HPV, a press release from the Health Promotion Journal of Australia stated.

You should have your first cervical screening within about three years of your first sexual encounter or by the age of 21. Most women between the ages of 21 and 30 should have a Pap test at least once a year, according to the latest recommendations from the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Women over 30 may require screenings less often.

There is evidence that 90 percent of the most common type of cervical is preventable with two yearly screening, however only two thirds of Australian women are doing so.

Lesbians having regular Pap smears were much more likely to visit health care providers who knew about their sexual orientation, and who were sensitive to gay and lesbian health needs compared to those not having regular pap tests.

Research has demonstrated that HPV is not the only sexually transmitted infection WSW need to worry about.

In a study published in the October 2000 issue of the Journal of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, WSW demonstrated a significantly higher prevalence of bacterial vaginosis (BV), hepatitis C, and HIV risk behaviors compared to non-WSW. "The assumption that women who engage in sex with other women are not at risk of STIs is clearly incorrect," said Katherine Fethers, M.D., lead author of the study from the Sexual Health Unit at Alice Springs Hospital in Australia.

A total of 1,408 women who reported ever having sex with another woman were compared with 1,423 women who had never had sex with a woman. The women had all attended the Sydney Sexual Health Center between 1991 and 1998. Only seven percent of the WSW or 283 women reported no sex with a male in the past 12 months (exclusive WSW) - 25 percent of these WSW reported never having had sex with a man.

For more information about Pap screenings visit the Web site PapScreen Victoria at www.papscreen.org.

that understanding.

"Too often gay youth are ignored, and the very people who should be helping them either don't know how or, because of bias, choose a course of action that is not healthy," said CR Executive Director Carol Reisinger. "At Common Roads, we endeavor to show young people that they are fine just as they are and that how they respond to the world is important. We try to help them build confidence in themselves and begin to view themselves as important individuals. We provide programs that will help them to develop their own skills. They have much to offer a community, and we hope to acknowledge their talents."

Colonial Park Mall is one establishment ready to help. The mall will host the Fifth Annual Magical Night of Giving on Sunday, November 16 from 6 to 9 p.m. as an extraordinary fundraising event to benefit charitable organizations like Common Roads. Available at the door, tickets may be purchased in advance for $5 with 100 percent of the proceeds benefiting Common Roads. Children 12 and under will be admitted free with an adult ticket holder. To purchase tickets, call 717-920-9534.

Common Roads Wish List:

Typewriter
Money for books, CDs and movies
Magazine subscriptions
Office supplies
Operating supplies for maintaining the facility
A coffee table and end tables
Computer stations (furniture) and software
Lamps
120-day planner that hangs on the wall and is erasable
Carpet cleaner

Make checks and/or donations payable to: Common Roads, 1300A N. Third St., Harrisburg, PA 17102 (carolr@commonroads.org), or call 717.920.9534 for more information.

Positive Opportunities

Positive Opportunities (PO), a 501 © 3, provides employment-related services and benefits counseling for HIV-infected individuals from all walks of life. PO also provides health and wellness workshops for community groups and organizations.

PO serves Lancaster, Dauphin, Perry, Cumberland and Lebanon counties in central Pennsylvania and works directly with AIDS Community Alliance, Pinnacle Health System and Hamilton Health Center. Funds are provided by Greater Harrisburg Foundation, National AIDS Fund, and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

As reported to the National AIDS Fund in 2002, PO assisted African/American, Black, Caribbean (62 percent), Hispanic and Latino (20 percent), Mixed Race (2 percent), and Caucasian (16 percent) populations. The age range of those who used PO services is 25 to 49 years old. The sexual orientation of PO clients is 55 percent heterosexual, 36 percent homosexual, and 9 percent bisexual. "All cash and other donations will directly benefit clients," said PO Board Vice President Don Dupes.

Positive Opportunities Wish List:

Two hours a month of Quickbooks 2003 accounting on PO's system.
Cash donations to assist clients with job search (mileage, transportation, clothing for interviews)
Computer paper
Paper clips
Manila folders

Make checks and/or donations to: Positive Opportunities, 1519 N. Front St., Harrisburg, PA 17102 (PosOps@aol.com).

Vision of Hope MCC

Vision of Hope MCC provides "a transformational encounter with the living God" to lgbtq individuals and those who support them. This is achieved through discipleship, education/training, outreach, prayer, quality worship, soul care, small groups and visionary leadership.

There are three ways to contribute to Vision of Hope. The first involves giving a general offering during worship services. The offering funds different ministries, such as worship, outreach and religious education for the children. Second, a contribution can be made to the Benevolence Fund, which provides assistance to people in the community. Contributions can also be made to the Building Fund, which helps to maintain the building and fund future building plans.

"Like so many others who attend a worship service for the first time, I was apprehensive as I climbed the steps to enter the church last Sunday," said recent first-time visitor Rich Conrad. "Within the first minutes of arrival, I had been greeted by numerous members who offered a genuine and caring welcome, and certainly made me feel a most welcome guest. By the end of the service, I had felt as though I had come home. God's call to joyously serve is evident and growing at Vision of Hope MCC, and I look forward to growing in Christ though [this] ministry."

Vision of Hope MCC Wish List:

Funding for additional staff (full-time church administrator, children's minister)
Funds for new air conditioning, a youth program, and fixing the stained glass windows

Make donations payable to: Vision of Hope MCC, 130 East Main St.,

continued on page 13

News NOTES

Lehigh Valley Pride Organizes for 2004

The folks at Lehigh Valley Pride are at it again! The group has already begun to plan a year full of events and activities serving the Lehigh Valley LGBT community.

Pride seeks volunteers to organize and implement their many programs and initiatives. Visit our new Web site, www.pridelv.org, for the latest event and meeting information.

Lehigh Valley Pride held festivities celebrating National Coming Out Month and successfully presented the LV Queer Film Festival. In the meantime, make your way to a Pride planning meeting to meet friends, get involved and make a difference. Pride Festival 2004 planning meetings are held at the F.A.C.T. office. All meetings are open to the public. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.

Williamsport College Holds Matthew Shepard Vigil

Bisexuals, Gays, Lesbians and Allies in Dialog (BGLAD) at Williamsport's Pennsylvania College of Technology held a candlelit vigil to remember the fifth year since Matthew Shepard's brutal and untimely death. The event took place October 12 on the Penn College Campus, according to Adrienne Mansfield, Vice President of BGLAD.

Wilkes-Barre Groups Held Dance Celebrating Diversity

In an effort to build community amongst the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community in Northeast Pennsylvania and its allies, several local groups joined in August to present the inaugural, "Dinner, Dance and Drag" held at Genetti Hotel and Convention Center in Wilkes-Barre.

The event featured a social hour, dinner and entertainment, including an impromptu drag show. The event was open to all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Proceeds benefited future social events through the Michael Pierson Memorial Project Fund that was founded in memory of the gay activist who was murdered in January 2003.

"Nothing can bring our friend back, but we can make sure his death does not go unnoticed nor in vain. The goal is to increase the public's awareness to the circumstances surrounding his death, and to the issues in the community that were so vital to Michael such as domestic violence, HIV education, gay and lesbian issues, child abuse and substance abuse," said Margie Bryant, one of Pierson Project's co-founders.

"Being named the beneficiary for this event is an honor," said John Dawe, the project's executive director. "It's rewarding to see people supporting our efforts."

The event was sponsored and organized by The Coming Out, Pride of Northeast Pennsylvania, Intriguing Scentsations, Wilkes University senior Amanda Brozana and the executive board of Pride of Northeast PA, and the Pierson Project. For more information about the Pierson Center, call 570.714.6767.

ACLU opens Harrisburg Office

The American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania has opened an office at 105 N. Front St., Suite 225, Harrisburg. The office will serve 49 counties in central and northern Pennsylvania and will be staffed by Paula K. Knudsen. She is a 2001 graduate of The Dickinson School of Law of the Pennsylvania State University.

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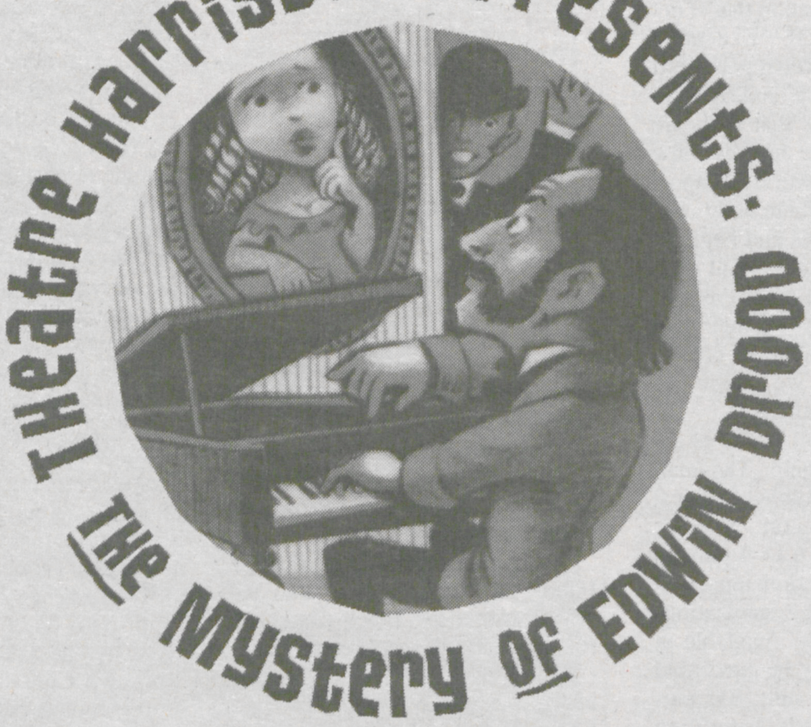

Theatre Harrisburg Presents: The Mystery of Edwin Drood
Rupert Holmes' raucous musical show within a show, where the audience gets to choose the ending!

Showing at Whitaker Center from November 8th-23rd. Tickets are only $25 & $15.00

Make a night of it... Special **Parev** dinner package: $57 for four-course dinner, free parking, orchestra-level seating & dessert following the show! Also, ask about our Hilton lodging package!

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Theatre Roundup

Written by Theatre Harrisburg

The Mystery of Edwin Drood:

Come as you are or who you want to be

Drag Queens Welcome!

Slip your skin for an evening at Theatre Harrisburg's latest production, the musical, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. The show offers theatre goers the chance to enter a world where they are encouraged from the very top of the show to slip their skin and be exactly what they are (or what they really want to be). "Changing identities is what the show is all about," says Theatre Harrisburg executive director Pete Regan.

From November 8-23, the Whitaker Center will be turned into the Music Hall Royale, the most uninhibited dance club in Harrisburg (or NYC for that matter), and as the opening number attests, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood's* performers and audience members alike are encouraged to get their groove on. With shades of Studio 54, the Royale is a club that embraces fabulousness and the interchangeability of attitude or gender:

"There you are, how very glad we are that there you are, it isn't who you are but where you are, and grateful are we to see, how fine and fair you are! There you are!"

With tongue firmly in cheek the performers of the Music Hall Royale, set in 1890's London, party, pimp and preen in a raucous tavern setting that will remind viewers of their favorite night spot, a place where anything goes and usually does! From opium smoking, to ribald love affairs, to a murder of passion this show combines the flashy numbers of a Vegas floorshow with the gruesome gossip of Jerry Springer's shameless freaks and geeks.

Based on Dickens' last, unfinished novel, Rupert Holmes' *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is also a whodunit featuring an interactive campaign where actors unabashedly solicit votes and encouragement from the audience, who will, by the way, ultimately determine the show's ending. And solicit they do, as one actor says to his portion of the audience at the start of the show:

"…..we the actors have not the slightest hint as to whom you will select as your Murderer… although I would appreciate any votes you give me, because my mother is in the audience tonight (shaaaboom). *You wouldn't deny a mother the joy of seeing her only son found guilty of murder, would you?"*

After a night at the Royale you won't have denied these performers (or yourself) a joyful thing!

Family Flag continued

experiences into positive tools for education. Much like the Clothesline Project and AIDS Quilt, The Family Flag Project uses art as a medium for personal healing for persons whose pain may be otherwise unresolved.

The project creates awareness and education by using visual images to aid in individuals understanding of how acts of intolerance and hatred affect people's lives. The project also provides a creative healing outlet for the many individuals affected by hate, discrimination and intolerance every day. "We also want to celebrate the progress that has been made in the hopes to continue down a path of love and acceptance where a flag of this nature need not exist," Storm said.

An awards ceremony was held Oct. 9 at the Whitaker Center.

Jump Street/Pennsylvania Cou- ncil on the Arts is a part of the Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts program that re-grants state art dollars to community arts programs. The Council's mission is to foster the excellence, diversity and vitality of the arts in Pennsylvania and to broaden the availability of the arts throughout the state. Funding for the PCA comes from the citizens of Pennsylvania through an annual state appropriation by the General Assembly. The PCA also receives funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

Economic Development continued

If Florida's theory holds true, then the success and long term growth of this merger could rest with the existing gay community. Most centers of technology-based business growth have high concentrations of gay couples. With the EDS/YI project, gay people could decide to move into the region for an interesting job, and then other diverse, creative folks may follow.

Why all the sudden interest in gay and lesbian employees? According to the Gay Economic Power & Technology Report, marketing and business communities now see gays as having viable and largely untapped economic power, especially in technology markets. Until recently, very little was known about gays and technology. That changed in July 2003, when the Forrester Research Group

continued on page 13

Sound OFF Central

Compliment or Complain

Sound Off Central is place for readers to anonymously (or you may use your name) share their thoughts on any topic – gay, lesbian, bisexual, straight, community strengths, community weaknesses, economic development issues, or civil rights. No more than 30 words.

You have a compliment or a complaint? Send it to soundoffAC@aol.com.

"What a great read, informative, classy. Your newspaper is much more substantive than PGN (Philadelphia Gay News)."

"Thank you to the Gay & Lesbian Film Festival following PrideFest this year."

"The paper looks good and I hope it will continue. Keep up the good work; I and many others appreciate it."

"I have received positive feedback on my *Alternative Central* article. Thanks again."

"Dude, the stories are good."

"Where does somebody go to get freedom 'from' religion? I think we already have enough freedom 'of' religion. I just want to be left alone already."

"I subscribed to *Alternative Central* and received my first issue. A job well done!"

"When did we do away with the separation of church and state in this country?"

"I'm glad we finally have a gay newspaper for central PA! Kudos! Bought my subscription today."

"Besides being a 'market,' we're also a 'movement.' Let's not forget that we still need to achieve the same basic civil rights, and they are not 'special rights,' as everyone else."

"Central PA's LGBT community needs to think of itself as a political entity. We must reward or punish politicians who support or don't support us."

"Finally, a newspaper for our community. I work hard, pay taxes and volunteer in the community. Your publication addresses me with respect. Thank you."

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Alternative Central Profile:

Yawana J. Wilmer:

Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center

by Michael Chapaloney

New York, New York, the song tells us that if we can make it there we can make it anywhere. New Yorker Yawana J. Wilmer, 25, decided she would make it in York as the house manager of the Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center.

Prior to her June 30 arrival in York, Wilmer resided for three years in Queens, NY. During this time she completed graduate work at Long Island University and worked at the Tilles Center for the Performing Arts and the Manhattan Theatre Club.

Wilmer's roots had been strongly planted in New York, growing up in Rochester and then earning a bachelor's degree from Oswego State University. All the while she was persistent with her desire to work in theater.

For more than a year after graduating from Long Island she sent at least five resumes each week. While waiting for response to return from this flood of resumes Wilmer took action to land a part-time job in theater.

"I quit my job at Old Navy, taking a pay cut to get my foot in the door at the Tilles Center," Wilmer said. Also during this year she obtained a business internship at the Manhattan Theatre Club. "I thought I had good people and management skills but I wanted to learn more about the business end."

It was this same desire to expand her experience and work in the theater that brought her from the Big Apple to the White Rose city. While continuing the barrage of resumes she spotted an opening for a box office manager at the Strand-Capitol.

Directors at the Strand recognized that Wilmer had management experience in Long Island so they proceed to interview her for that position instead.

AC: What does your job as house manager entail?

YW: I am the host of the party. With a staff of volunteer and paid employees we make everybody feel comfortable, we say, "Welcome to the Strand-Capitol, how are you?" My goal is making patrons feel good when they come in and when they leave. This is what you call a presenting house. It has only been open a short time and I've seen the same faces over and over again. I am one of the first faces the theater people see.

AC: What inspired you into this profession? As a child?

YW: In high school I worked on "Hello, Dolly" and my mother pulled me off of the show. I remember being very sad. I like working with people and I like when you hear people clapping, even while back stage. I'm not happy when not doing theater…there's something about the people, the aura.

AC: Involved with school, college plays? What were some of your favorites?

YW: "Guys and Dolls", "No, No Nanette" and The Sound of Music. But, I'm not an actor. At Oswego State you have to take an acting class; I was deathly afraid and waited until the last semester.

AC: How do you view the potential for cultural growth in York?

YW: In this theater in general I would like to see expanded genres with more African and gay and lesbian. I've heard of more restaurants coming and people making a move to start things downtown. Older volunteers say it has changed a lot and will continue to change.

AC: How has the reception been in York?

YW: Everybody has welcomed me. They ask if I'm settled ok. I feel good when volunteers ask about me and I feel lucky to be the face that represents the Strand-Capitol.

AC: How do you view the health of community involvement with the theater?

YW: Have about 100 volunteers now and people calling everyday wanting to get involved. We had between 800 and 1,000 at the open house and people are still asking for tours.

AC: How is show attendance?

YW: It has not been sold out except for Kenny G, but I don't feel that selling 700 or 800 for a 1,200 seat theater is a problem. People have to start training themselves to be involved in the arts.

AC: Healthy involvement from the gay community?

YW: I have a few openly gay volunteers. The Strand will host FAB this year, the Fall Achievement Benefit. (FAB is fundraising event for the gay and lesbian community).

AC: You mentioned your girlfriend, what are her thoughts on York and this new opportunity?

YW: She was born and raised in West Virginia…she likes the big city, but she likes York. You do what you have to do. We try to see each other once a month. She saw me go through a tough time when I was sending out five resumes a week for a year, so she is excited for me.

AC: Outside of your job what are two of your favorites in York?

YW: The Market Street Café and Wal-Mart.

AC: Do you have anything to add?

YW: I am happy to be here and be a part of a gay community. I want to be an outstanding member, I want to be a role model.

For more information on performances at the Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center in York visit www.strandcapitol.org or call 717-846-1155.

A Couple of guys
"The Hills Are Alive..."
WELL, HEY NEIGHBORS! COME BY FOR DINNER... WE HAVE WIENIES!
BUT WE'LL BE SERVING BURGERS!
OOH! WE'RE SO BAD! HAHAHA!
IT'S GREAT TO GET AWAY FROM WORK. I'VE BEEN BUSIER THAN LUCY RICARDO IN THAT CANDY FACTORY.
I TELL YOU, WE BROUGHT MORE LUGGAGE THAN MR. AND MRS. HOWELL... AND GINGER!
HEY BIG SPENDER! ♪ SPENNNND...A LITTLE TIME WITH ME!
AND STOP BY TOMORROW FOR BRUNCH!
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS A GAY CAMPGROUND?
DOES A BEAR SH··?
OH, NEVER MIND.
©2003 Dave Brousseau

Local TV & Radio Personalities Present *The Normal Heart*

Alicia Richards and Dennis Owens of ABC-27 join Dennis John Cahill of Comcast Sportsnet and WGAL for a star-filled dramatic reading of the emotionally charged classic Larry Kramer play *The Normal Heart.* For one night only on Sunday, December 7, 7 p.m. the cast takes over at The Open Stage of Harrisburg, 223 Walnut Street, Harrisburg.

The cast will transport the audience back to the early days of the AIDS epidemic in New York City as a group of men struggle with how to save their friends and the community from a new and horrifying disease. Tickets are $20 in advance $25 at the door. All proceeds from the performance benefit AIDS Community Alliance and HIV/AIDS services throughout south central Pennsylvania.

The Normal Heart, originally performed in New York City in 1985, traces the early days of the AIDS epidemic through the life of Ned Weeks and his friends as they struggle to come to grips with the loss of friends, the growing horror of the epidemic and the challenge of love in the face of disease.

The play's action follows the characters and their efforts to combat the mystery illness that would come to be known as AIDS from the disease's earliest appearances in 1981 until 1984. *The Normal Heart* was one of the first dramatic pieces written in response to HIV/AIDS. In 2004, *The Normal Heart* will have a revival at the Public Theater in New York City.

The proceeds from the evening benefit the services and programs of AIDS Community Alliance (ACA). ACA offers HIV/AIDS care and supportive services and HIV/AIDS prevention/education programs in Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Mifflin and Perry Counties.

More than 840 individuals and families infected and affected by HIV/AIDS access ACA's services each month. The organization also provides, education, awareness and HIV counseling and testing services to over 1,000 individuals monthly.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call AIDS Community Alliance at 1-800-867-1550.

SPARC continued

Pittsburgh's *PlanetQ* newspaper, delivered the keynote address on the recent overturning of sodomy laws by the U.S. Supreme court. He also revisited Sen. Rick Santorum's (R-Pa.) discriminatory comments made in July as a backdrop to underscore why it is an ideal time for the LGBTQ community to act.

SPARC is primarily responsible for having the Pennsylvania Human Relations commission act amended to include "sexual orientation" and "transgender" as protected classes under the code.

Diakon Adoption Services Seeks Gay and Lesbian Couples as Adoptive Parents

by Mark Smith

Diakon Adoption Services is looking for more folks like Kay Rainwater and her partner Gail Lee. Earlier this year, they finalized the adoption of Kory, 14, and his seven-year-old sister Anastasia.

Kory and Anastasia represent the largest group of children looking for homes, the 8-14 age range. Placements with alternative families, such as gay and lesbian couples, have a good track record even when compared to straight families, and especially for children with special needs.

In addition, Diakon has found that York County Courts are very supportive of gay and lesbian adoptions. The process was "grueling" according to Rainwater and Lee, but they had a solid relationship and a strong faith. "We placed the matter in God's hands and got two good kids," Rainwater says.

Diakon, formerly known as Tressler, is seeking more gay and lesbian couples to be adoptive parents. With the PA Supreme Court ruling allowing second parent adoptions, gay and lesbian couples are now in a much better legal position to be adoptive parents.

Diakon participates in the Statewide Adoption Network which is part of the PA Department of Welfare. Currently there are 150,000 children in the US looking for permanent homes with 1,444 of them in Pennsylvania. "Many of these want and deserve real families," says Diakon executive director Suzanne Piccolo.

Many of the children have physical or emotion problems due to circumstances beyond their control, Piccolo says. When a family falls apart, is dysfunctional, negligent, or abusive, the children often become distrusting of adults. Children naturally grieve the loss of their biological family, but they are looking for caring, stable families that will help them through the grieving process and give them a new outlook on life, a second chance to experience childhood and grow into their full potential as adults.

Piccolo also reports that one of the largest percentages of homeless people in America is young adults who were in the foster care system and did not get adopted. "That's what happens when children do not get adopted," she says, adding "they do not have a place to go home."

The agency provides 20 hours of training on the adoption process and the issues facing adopted children and parents. The organization also provides at least a six-month, longer if necessary, supervision period in which they help children and parents adjust to the newly formed family unit.

Thanks to the Statewide Adoption Network, in Pennsylvania there are no fees involved with adoption, if you adopt a child from Pennsylvania. In addition, there are tax credits of $10,000 per child that can be taken over five years.

In addition, children eligible for adoption often receive state subsidies such as medical assistance and per-diem payments for their care. These subsidies continue even after the child is adopted, hopefully easing the financial burden on adoptive parents.

"More important than the financial aspects, is the opportunity adoptive parents have to change the life of a child by providing them with a loving, caring, stable environment," Piccolo says.

Diakon helps prospective adoptive parents determine what type of child will fit in best in their home. They will complete a family profile, home study, check references, criminal backgrounds, and for any history of child abuse. Next the organization interviews both partners and visit makes a home visit. Finally, they will help with the legal process of adopting, making sure biological parental rights have been terminated, the filing intents and petitions to adopt with the court, court hearings, and finalizing the adoption.

Adoption can be a lengthy process, an "emotional rollercoaster" say Rainwater and Lee, "but in the end, it is all worth it." Kory, who has some memory problems and attention deficit disorder, had been flunking everything in school. Since being adopted, he has become an honor roll student.

Kory and Anastasia are representative of the largest group of children looking for homes in the 8-14 age range. Rainwater and Lee report that placements with alternative families, such as gay and lesbian couples, have a better track record than straight families, especially when it comes to children with special needs.

In addition, Diakon has found that York County Courts are very supportive of gay and lesbian adoptions. The process was "grueling" according to Rainwater and Lee, but they had a solid relationship and a strong faith. "We placed the matter in God's hands and got two good kids," Rainwater says.

Diakon Adoption Services is part of Lutheran Social Ministries. More information is available from: www.diakon.org, www.adoptpakids.org, www.adoptuskids.org, 717-845-9113, or by visiting the office, 836 S. George St., York.

Alternative Central Hangs with Warhol Clan

continued

the Warhola family. Andy's brother, Paul, a Pittsburgh junkman, would regularly uproot his family of six kids (including Jamie) and trek to New York City for visits with Andy and his mother. Andy's mother, Julia, lived with him until her death. Warhola's book joins a growing list of celebs entering the children's book market, among them Madonna, who recently released "The English Roses." Warhola is poised to collaborate on another "celeb" children's book, but *AC* swore to hold the name of the well-known person a secret.

The story takes place over one weekend during Andy's breakthrough year of 1962 — the year in which he had his first show and introduced the world to paintings of *Campbell's Soup Cans*, *Marilyns* and *Elvises*.

While helping Jamie and his sister Madalen (who produces Warhola Wear) to hang his artwork, I realized that families, famous or mundane, are pretty much the same. For example, everyone moved around everyone else's placement of a framed piece of art, just like placing furniture in a new house. When we finished, we devoured a huge vat of pasta and garden salad while sitting out back of the Alliance. In other words, the Warholas need no fanfare.

During and after our simple meal, we told stories. The Warholas are great storytellers in that strong Pennsylvania ethnic tradition of keeping the memory alive. (Sorry, I don't eat and tell.) What many do not know is that "Bubba," Andy's mother and clan's maternal anchor, lived with Andy in a garden apartment on Lexington Avenue and 89th.

"Many writers said he made her live in the basement. That's not true. It was a typical garden-level apartment in a five-story house. She had her own quarters," Jamie clarified. Her quarters are illustrated in the book, as is each level of Warhol's 89th Street home.

One of the pieces hanging on the gallery walls and in the book is of Warhol niece Madalen, called "Maddie," spooking her famous uncle as she walked into his bedroom one morning. She had been waiting on the steps leading to his bedroom floor with a glass of fresh-squeezed orange juice, his morning tradition. The door was ajar and she proceeded in, only to find him without his wig on. "I always thought the other kids tricked me and opened his door so I'd go in early. There he was with a bandana on, pushed back partially off his head. We both jumped!" she remembers.

Those morning visits were special because that's when Andy would tell his nieces and nephews about all the famous people he'd met the night before. They were a "family" like any other, and he was "Uncle Andy" who just happened to be known around the world.

From left to right: Abby Hoover (Madalen's daughter, Jamie's niece); Madalen Warhola Hoover (Jamie's sister, Andy's niece); Oonagh Carroll-Warhola (Jamie's daughter, Madalen's niece); James Warhola, art historian and event organizer Deb Miller, and Alternative Central Publisher & editor Frank Pizzoli standing in the background.

I will share that I opined to Warhola that with 30 million viewers tuning in for American Idol's finale, his Uncle's Andy's observation that everyone will be famous for 15 minutes has finally morphed. "Everyone will be famous IN 15 minutes, at which point celebrity status will no longer matter," I mused while he laughed.

Childhood idols reported by *AC* readers make for an interesting group of influencers.

Ted Martin, *AC* freelance writer and president of Business Association of Gays & Lesbians (BAGAL), said, "As a kid, I idolized Franklin D. Roosevelt. I grew up in Western Pennsylvania, where everyone remembered him like he lived next door. I spent much of my youth in the library, avoiding sports and taunting bullies, so someone who couldn't walk unaided for most of his life like FDR and succeeded in saving the country during the Depression and then the world in World War II was just plain irresistible. When I was young, FDR had been dead for 60 years but people still talked and argued about him. Having read all those books, I could contribute to the conversation and it gave me the perfect excuse for a coveted seat at the 'big people's' table."

Reader and working artist Anna Botsford, who studied with Smithsonian collected artist Chester Snowden, says her childhood idols were Lucille Ball and James Garner in *Maverick*. "They were both strong individuals," she said.

Another reader, Tamara McGovern, looked up to Joan Jett and her own grandfather, Leroy, "because he was unconditionally loving," the same as Warhola describes his Uncle Andy.

Da Vinci board member, art historian and event organizer Deb Miller's childhood idol (aside from her parents), not surprisingly, was also Andy. As a 1960s child growing up in New York, she vicariously followed Warhol's career through the media. The glamour, excitement and creativity of his notorious studio, The Factory, led her to become an art historian.

"Had I been 10 years older, I'm sure I would have been a part of it all," Miller said. "Luckily, as an art history Ph.D. student, I had the opportunity to meet Andy and several members of The Factory, as well as the Warhola family. We all hit it off immediately, and I've been able to live my childhood dream. Now they're not just my colleagues in the art world, but also my close friends."

AC freelance writer Ron Melusky said, "I didn't have any role models growing up. The TV generation really doesn't need them, since the scripture of the holy box tells us that we're all our own stars. Wouldn't it be nice if that were true?"

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How's a Film Festival Work Anyway?

Since beginning in 2002, the region's annual Gay & Lesbian Film Festival has attracted nearly 1,500 independent movie lovers. Straight, gay, young, old — they all share a love of good film. Like one of this year's attendees, in her 80s, said," No one wants to die uneducated".

Without the kind help of Midtown Cinema owner, Allen Brown, the region's gay and lesbian community would not have a home for the film festival. "I am glad to open my doors to the gay and lesbian community to screen quality independent films," said Brown.

Since so many faithful moviegoers suggested movies for future events, festival organizers thought it might be helpful for readers who want to offer suggestions to know the following:

Things to know and remember when planning for and selecting 2004 films:

1. Midtown Cinema (MC) screens ONLY 35MM films. That's the only screening equipment the facility has. Any other medium — video, 16MM, digital — cannot be shown without the rental of expensive AV equipment, an expense the film festival cannot afford. Donations of this expensive equipment are not available at this time.

2. Select films that are not old and already out there on cassette and/or DVD. Films released within one or two years from date of next festival are good choices. Offering old films defeats the purpose of attracting folks into a film festival when films can be rented for home viewing.

3. We need to have a balanced selection of gay male and lesbian selections. Festival organizers note that they had originally booked "Gasoline," this season's hottest lesbian independent film, but lost it because the film went to national release. That's how this business works. Those were the conditions of signing the contract. Be aware of this aspect of the "film booking" business.

4. MC puts out all the money to reserve the films upfront, festival organizers do not, although the Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg has made between $500-750 available both years to cover "start up" marketing costs like posters and brochures.

From festival revenue, MC also pays the remainder of the rental fees to the releasing company AFTER the film is shown (that's money out in addition to the initial rental fee) AND all shipping costs to/from the festival. MC does not charge the gay community rental fees for use of its large (or any theater), or for staff time to sell tickets and concessions. All of these upfront payments for expenses and services represent a very generous contribution to the event by MC.

5. Film length should be approximately 75 minutes or longer, but no longer than two hours. The films are rotated in one donated theater and need to be spooled and rewound etc. and so the four film times need to make "scheduling" sense.

6. The festival screens four films each day for seven consecutive days (beginning on a Friday and concluding the following Thursday) because that's the way the owner runs the film schedule for the two other screens in his theater. We cannot run outside that schedule.

Constructive suggestions, volunteers to help select films and work during the event for 2004 are encouraged. Contact PosOps@aol.com.

bitter girl

BANDWIDTH
SO YOU'RE THE NEW DRUMMER FOR..."CIGARETTE GIRL!"
DON'T MAKE FUN. I NEED THE (ADMITTEDLY NEGLIGIBLE) MONEY.
SAT. 10 PM CIGARETTE GIRL
OH PATSY, I KNOW THAT. I'M JUST JEALOUS 'CAUSE I'M TOO OLD TO BE DRAGGING AROUND TO CLUBS AT ALL HOURS...
SAT. -10 PM- CIGARETTE GIRL
I'M A NIGHT OWL ANYWAY. AND THEY HAVE A VAN TO HAUL THE EQUIPMENT. AND IT'S JUST SO FUN TO PLAY DRUMS AGAIN!
IT'S THE PRACTICE SESSIONS THAT ARE GONNA KILL ME...
KINDA SNUG. BUT THE ACOUSTICS ROCK!
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Suzanne Westenhoefer

at the

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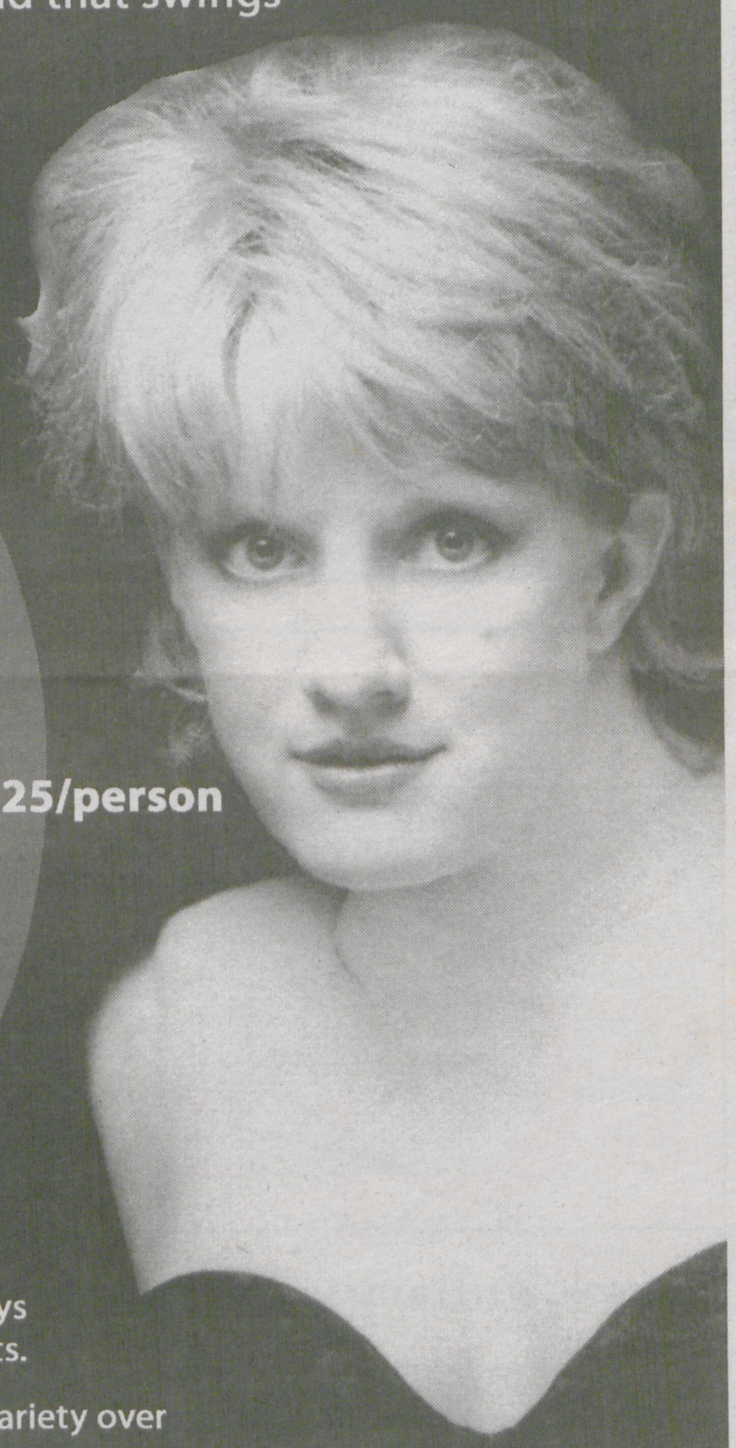

Cocktail Reception w/Suzanne 6:30 p.m.
Premium open bar and butlered hors d'oeuvres

FAB Main Event 7:00 p.m. - midnight
7:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. - Silent auction
9:00 p.m. - 9:15 p.m. - FAB Community Service Award presentation
9:15 p.m. - 10:15 p.m. - Comedy of Suzanne Westenhoefer

Cocktail Reception and Main Event w/premium seating $125/person

Main Event Only w/reserved seating $65/person

Black Tie or Business Dress

Mix and Mingle

Accomac Catering will be butlering an assortment of elegant hors d' oeuvres as guests mingle throughout the Strand-Capitol complex.

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Saturday, November 22, 2003

For Reservations call The Greater Harrisburg Foundation 717.236.5040
Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center Box Office 717.846.1111

Proceeds from FAB2003 will benefit non-profit organizations serving the Gay and Lesbian community in York, Lancaster, Cumberland Dauphin, Perry, Franklin, and Lebanon counties. Funds are granted through Equity for Gays and Lesbians (EGAL) Partnership Fund and administered by The Greater Harrisburg Foundation.

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The Idiot's Guide to Getting Over the Ex

by Hayden Shelley

Hayden ("Fred") Shelley appeared at PrideFest 2003

Boys will be boys. At least that's what I've read in this month's issue of *Seventeen*. Finding the boy of your dreams is not easy feat. More often than not, we invest much time in the wrong boy and end up with a broken heart and a few "I-told-you-so" comments from our closest friends. Even still, we mourn the loss of those would-be lovers. It's normal. It's even expected. However, we also need to bounce back from those mini-tragedies because the sea is full of fish. So, I bring to you a guide to getting over those breakups.

Phase One — Wallowing in Drama

It's okay to be disappointed when your boy leaves you for whatever reason. No one expects you to be doing cartwheels five minutes after he's left you at your favorite restaurant, stuck with the tab. Accept what has happened. This is the time to purge the drama. Cry your heart out. Rent sappy movies. Blast depressing love songs and lip-synch into the spoon you've just used to eat that pint of Ben and Jerry's. If you're lucky, you can enlist the help of your best friend to help you through the early stages. Bonus points if your friend refers to him only in the form of nicknames like A-hole or D-head.

(Best friends, take note: Be selfless and be there for your friend. It's good karma because one day it might be you burying your head in the pillow. Think about it.)

Phase Two — Boyfriend? I Had a Boyfriend?

I don't recommend staying in Phase One for more than about a week. There comes a point when you have to move on to Phase Two before you begin to really look pathetic. If your best friend is nearby, he/she will let you know just where that line is. Phase Two is a difficult phase, but it must be done. It's time to take those pictures of him and his dog off the refrigerator. Take his toothbrush out of the bathroom. Stop smelling his favorite T-shirt and return his clothes. Even the good stuff. Make a mix tape of songs that will empower you. "Oh no, not I — I will survive!" Delete all those saved voicemails. Take him off your speed dial.

In addition to these important steps, you must avoid places where you might break down. Stop going to your favorite restaurant for a while. Avoid any place that will conjure up memories of him. You will more than likely still want to be friends, because that's what he said, didn't he? "We can still be friends." However, that will come in time. That time is not right now. You need safe distance before you can stand face-to-face with him without turning spineless. Cut off as much contact as possible.

Phase Three — The Self Esteem Workshop

I would like to personally thank Alanis for giving us "You Oughta Know." As much as it might feel good to indulge in man bashing and the kind of revenge often seen in movies, playing the role of the bitter ex is simply unattractive. Bitterness and the whole woe-is-me thing is very late '90s. In these times, the only revenge we indulge in is the kind of revenge that doesn't harm the enemy but benefits us.

Start out by making a list of your good qualities. Despite rejection, know that you are a good person, inside and out. Next, focus on the little things you would like to change about yourself. What better revenge than to go to the gym and work on those coveted abs you see in magazines? What sweet victory you will have when you show up in your new stylish threads! Accentuate the positive. Accentuate YOU. And when your ex sees you out on the town looking like a million dollars, watch the jaw hit the pavement. The look is as priceless as your new air of confidence.

Phase Four —— Selective Memory Lane

After every breakup, we make strides forward, but we also run the risk of regressing. It's very easy to look back on the failed relationship and see our ex in only a positive light. Sometimes we romanticize the past and play those images in our heads over and over like syndicated reruns. No, no, no. Focus on the things you didn't get from your lover. Unearth his faults. Know that you are better off because you're worth more than whatever his name is. Gee, why did you even bother crying over him? He's obviously not worth your tears. Or positive thoughts.

Again, enlist the help of your best friend. A good best friend will not only tell you what his biggest flaws were, but they will invent other flaws to help you along in deciding that you are better off without him. ("He really had a big head? I never noticed. Ewww, how could I have not seen that?")

Phase Five — The Madonna Complex

Take a note from the life of Miss Reinvention herself. Keep them guessing. Make a few changes. Change your hairstyle.

continued on page 13

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Shimmer Into the Night

If you're 18 or older, but not old enough to enter a bar, where do you and your friends go?

Shimmer into the night at the 18-and-older club Shimmer, a "safe space" for younger members of the region's LGBT community. Operated by Stallions Entertainment Complex (N. 3rd St., Harrisburg), the club is located on the fourth floor with a separate entrance and is not accessible from the other levels.

"We were approached by members of the community to provide a safe, but fun, space for gay youth. We opened Shimmer," said Stallions manager Barry Hackman, a veteran on the regional club scene with 14 years of DJ experience. He's been the general manager of the complex for three years.

"We opened on Pride night in 2001," said Chris "Phoenix" Oplinger, 22, who's been working there ever since. His co-worker "Moosh" Mumma, 20, shares weekend shifts with him for the mixed crowds of youth packing the place on Friday ($4) and Saturday ($5) nights from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

"We're an alternative to the other under-21 clubs where gay youth are often hassled and shunned, and sometimes worse," said Hackman. "And it's more fun than roaming a mall."

"Preppie, Goth, punk, rave, schoolgirl and their friends end up here," said Moosh. He added that he sees lots of straight friends of gay youth joining the fun in the alcohol-free space. The club has a live DJ every Friday and Saturday night, who takes requests from the good-sized dance floor.

Shimmer also offers a pool table, a lounge and a bar serving all your favorite nonalcoholic drinks. So come out and see DJ Frost as he spins your favorite R&B, house, trance and club music.

"It's a friendly, talkative, gay 'Cheers.' And safe, too," Phoenix said.

"We're serious about keeping it safe and alcohol-free," noted Hackman. His staff runs a soda and juice bar with lots of tasty choices in addition to soda and bottled water.

Hackman said there are usually three staff members — if not five for special events — on duty when Shimmer is open, as well as the complex's regular security and other staff working on various club levels.

Some of the special events late night revelers find include drag shows and theme parties put on by the youth themselves. "Glow stick night is always popular. We've done funky hat night and karaoke nights too," Hackman said. They also host birthday parties, which are especially popular since everyone can join in, even straight friends and family, and enjoy a space that lets everyone be him- or herself.

The currently reigning Miss Shimmer, Lexus Diamond, gives up her title in mid-October, when another club representative is chosen by those in attendance that night.

Afterward, the crowd may pile in cars to Eat & Park or Waffle House or Denny's.

"They're hungry. Many nights they've driven from York, Allentown, Lancaster, Wilkes-Barre, Lebanon, Baltimore, Philadelphia, State College, Lehigh Valley, Selinsgrove, Williamsport, Chambersburg, even Erie," Hackman said.

Readers can check event dates for Shimmer through the Stallions Web site at:www.stallionsclub.com.

'Tis the Season continued

Mountville, PA 17554, or call 717.285.9070 for more information.

Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg

The Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg Inc. is a nonprofit 501c (3) organization that operates an information resource center for central Pennsylvania's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. The Switchboard operates a telephone and Internet information service and conducts other special projects to deliver information about, and to, LGBT communities.

Recently, the Switchboard began a collaborative arrangement with Benchmark Media Group, Inc. to publish *Alternative Central* (*AC*) six times annually. Your $20 (or more) annual membership fee (see form in this issue) helps to publish *AC*, keep the Web site (www.AskGLSH.org) up-to-date and keep the telephone lines open.

The Switchboard resource information covers the geographic regions including Harrisburg, Lancaster, York, Reading, Williamsport and State College. Our Web site was made possible through a grant from The Greater Harrisburg Foundation/ EGAL Partnership Fund.

"The Switchboard, now the oldest LGBT organization in central Pennsylvania, needs an infusion of new blood. We need people to step forward and get involved and to financially support our much-used services," said Switchboard President Charlie Smith.

Gay & Lesbian Switchboard Wish List:

For every LGBT person in central Pennsylvania to buy an annual $20 Switchboard Membership and Alternative Central Subscription so that we can continue to provide telephone support for the more than 3,000 calls received annually

10 reliable volunteers to provide telephone support from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday

Gift certificates totaling $1,000 from Staples, Office Max, Office Depot in order to purchase a one-year supply of office supplies

Five reliable volunteers to help distribute *Alternative Central* in Lancaster, York, Harrisburg and other destinations every other month

Donated, professional cleaning services for the new center

Gift certificates and/or donations of trash bags, paper towels and bathroom supplies

Donations to the Switchboard's College/Technical School Fund awarded annually (please clearly indicate on check memo line that donation is for Scholarship Fund)

Any contribution is tax deductible. Make donations payable to: Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg Inc., 1300A N. Third St., Harrisburg, PA 17102 (info@askglsh.com) or call 717.234.0328 for more information.

AIDS Community Alliance

The AIDS Community Alliance provides and empowers individuals who have been impacted by HIV and AIDS with the education, the skills and the resources necessary to enhance and sustain their desired quality of life through professional confidential services that are inclusive of all communities in the region served.

"Anything we have donated from our list helps. A lot of things aren't paid for from grants or other funding," said AIDS Community Alliance CEO Phil Goropoulos.

AIDS Community Alliance Wish List:

Cleaning supplies (floor cleaner, window cleaner, paper towels)

Copy paper/color copy paper

Hand soap

Toilet paper

Gift cards to K-Mart, Wal-Mart, and Giant Food or Weis Markets

Contributions may be made to AIDS community alliance, 401 Division Street, Suite 100, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

Economic Development continued

surveyed 60,000 households on technology use and generated these surprising results:

(1) Gay men and women use the Internet and tech devices at significantly higher rates than their heterosexual counterparts.

(2) 29 percent of gay men and women have been online for the past seven years, compared to 18 percent of heterosexuals.

(3) In addition to using the Internet for activities like shopping and banking, gays are more likely to engage in community-building activities online.

(4) In a three-month span, 63 percent of gays made an online purchase, compared to 53 percent of heterosexuals.

With impressive numbers on technology reported by Forrester, it could be that a merger like EDS/YI will yield benefits not only to the companies' pocket books, but also to city dwellers looking for help in turning around struggling neighborhoods. In short, the proof of Florida's theory is always going to be concrete improvements in a region's economic health and cultural diversity.

The concept of diversity comes up often in Florida's work. In the larger world, the word means different things to different people. But for him, the word is more of a drawing card than a lofty goal. "Diversity is simply something that creative people value in all its manifestations," he recently explained. "Creative-minded people enjoy a mix of influences. They want to hear different kinds of music and try different kinds of food. They want to meet and socialize with people unlike themselves, trade views and spar over issues."

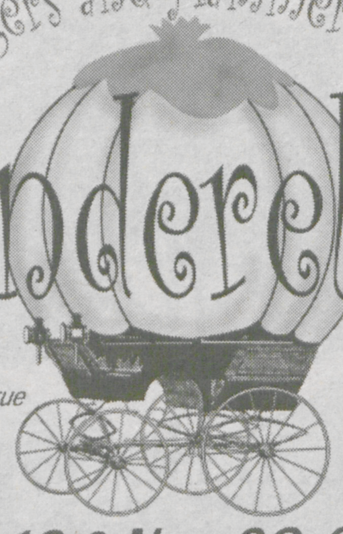
All of these qualities of the Creative Class, some of whom are gay and lesbian folks, are music to the ears of those who want to continue revitalizating our region.

YORK LITTLE THEATRE

presents

Rodgers and Hammerstein's

Cinderella



An enchanted kingdom of dreams-come-true appears at the wave of a magical wand!

Directed by Julie Aiken & Diane Krause

Co-produced by Susquehanna Pfaltzgraff

Nov. 14-16 & Nov. 20-23, 2003

8:00 pm except Sundays at 3 pm

YORK LITTLE THEATRE COMING EVENTS!

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Magical holiday show for the whole family!

Co-Produced by Stock & Leader

Performances: Dec. 5-7 & Dec. 12-14, 2003

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Dramatic masterpiece exploring the whirlwind events of the famous Scopes trial.

Co-Produced by Bradley Lifting

Auditions: Nov. 17 & 18, 2003

Performances: Jan. 23-25 & Jan. 29-Feb. 1, 2004

TREASURE ISLAND

Swashbuckling pirate classic!

Co-Produced by R & R Log Homes

Auditions: Jan. 19 & 20, 2004

Performances: Mar. 19-21 & Mar. 26-28, 2004

YORK LITTLE THEATRE

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The Idiot's Guide continued

(This does not mean going platinum blonde. Men with dark hair should avoid this trap. It's not flattering and even more so, you will definitely look like a queen trapped in the '80s.) Get a piercing. Get a new routine. Try something different that you've always wanted to try, like skydiving. Or for those of you less daring, the new sushi place in Chinatown. Remember, you are still you. Just slightly different than the person you used to be when you were in a relationship. However, you might want to consult a few friends before making such drastic changes. Make sure they don't lie to you. Lying will only lead to mistakes at your expense.

Phase Six — Celebrate Singlehood

Now, I know all of you are going to ask me what's so great about being single. Think about it. You have countless adventures out with your friends, you are free to flirt with as many boys as you wish and you don't have to worry about curfews. If you're up for it, find some post-breakup booty with a beautiful stranger or your pinch-hitting fuck buddy. Above all, know that your life is at a new beginning. Act like it. Indulge in life. This is your show. Be your own leading man. Don't fade into the backdrop. Take the lead. Take a bow. It's all about you.

Phase Seven — Back in the Saddle Again

You will know when you are ready to settle into something again. Listen to your heart. It's trying to tell you something. When the moment is right, when you are healed from the past, your body will tell you that it's time to put that fabulous booty to the relationship test yet again. And who knows? Maybe this time, things will last. After all, you know deep down how fabulous you are. In time, someone else is sure to be clued into that, too.

In the meantime, suck it up. It's not the end of the world. Hearts are broken every day. You will survive. Trust me on that.

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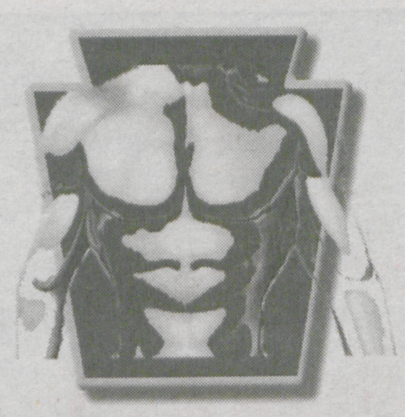

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Contest at The Pink Lizard
Sunday November 23rd @8:00pm

Victory Party at Neptune's
Midnight following the Contest

Entry Deadline Sunday November 16th
applications available from your bartender or at
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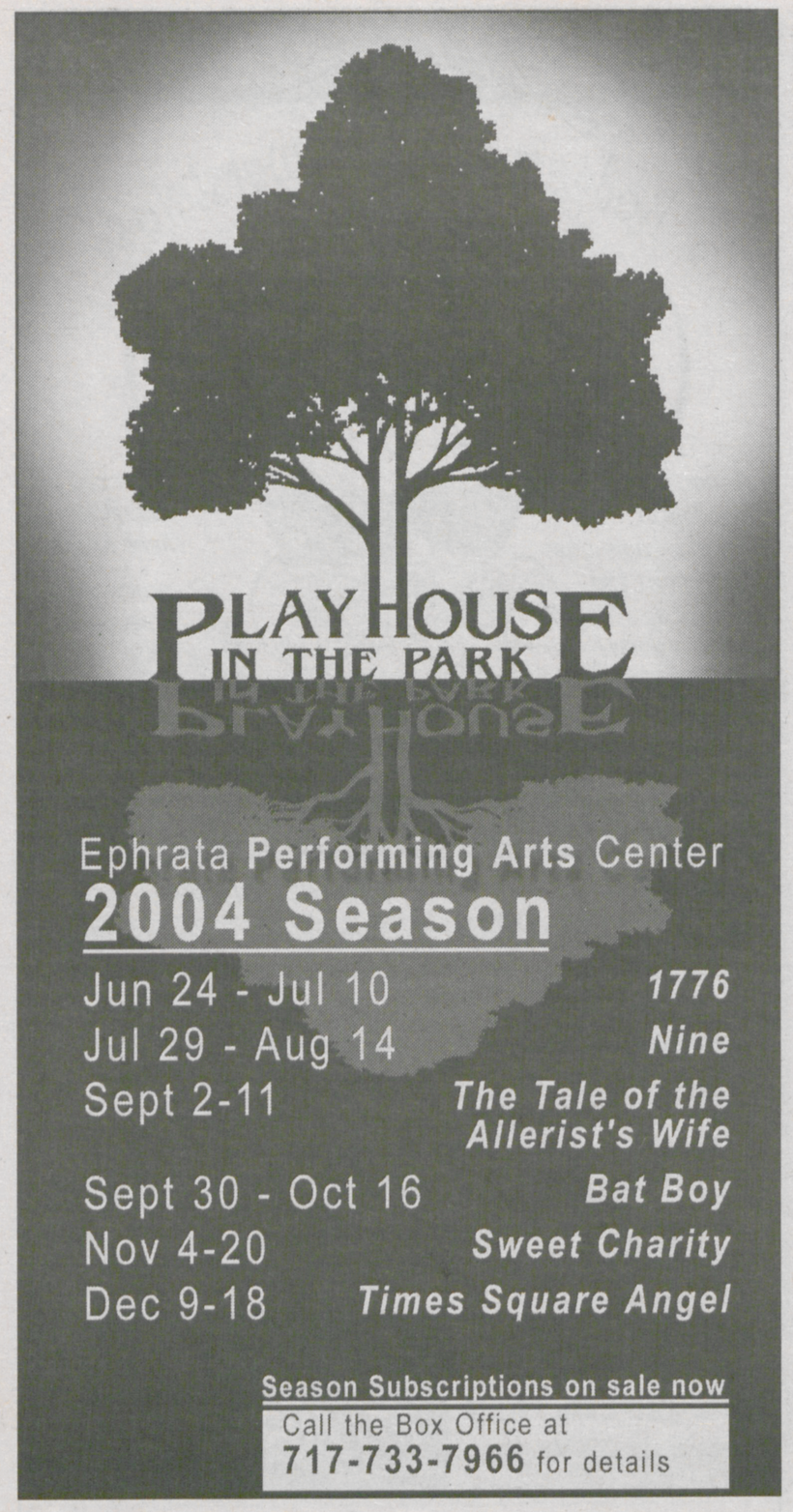
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Get Connected to your Community

Social Organizations

Business Association for Gay and Lesbian (BAGAL)
Social/Business Professionals. Meets every other month. PO Box 135 Harrisburg, PA 17108 Phone: 717.612.8445.
Email: BAGALPA@aol.com.

Common Roads - Youth group. Ages 14-24.
Social/Information/Support. Social activities every Friday eve at 7:00 P.M. 1300A North 3rd St, Harrisburg. Email: info@commonroads.org. Website: www.commonroads.org. Voice: 717.920.9534.

Gay & Lesbian Organization of Reading & Allentown - PO Box 1952, Allentown, PA 18105, non-profit social group for adult men & women, singles & couples. 1 or 2 activities each month including potlucks, bowling, movie nights, hikes, dinners, etc.
Email: glorainpa@aol.com.

Harrisburg Gay Men's and Women's Volleyball -
Social/Recreation. Every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m., Baughman United Methodist Church, New Cumberland Cost: $2.50, Contact: Jim at 233.3172.

Harrisburg Women's Rugby Club - Looking for players for summer and fall league. No experience necessary. Email: rugbydog34@aol.com.

Lambda Car Club -
Social/Recreation. Meets monthly. Email: Buickbum@aol.com Voice: Contact John Ball at 717.238.9766.

Pennsmen. Leather/Levi/Social. Membership is open to anyone over the age of 21 with an interest in the lifestyle. Meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at the 704 Strawberry. Contact: Steve at 717.232.3785. Website: www.pennsmen.org, Email: jesjames71@comcast.net.

Pride Festival of Central PA -
Planning meetings. Meets second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m., Volunteers welcome. Email: info@harrisburgpride.org. Website: www.harrisburgpride.org. Voice: 717.234.0328.

The Rainbow Bowling League -
ABC Bowling Lanes - Eisenhower Blvd, Harrisburg. The Rainbow Bowling League bowls every Thursday at 8:55 p.m. The Rainbow Bowling League is considered a "mixed" league: in other words, both men and women are welcome. We invite anyone interested in joining. Openings for individual bowlers, teams and substitutes. Contact: Mark or Robert 763-8444 for more details.

Renaissance LSV
Transgendered.
Social/Information/Support. Meets the 1st Saturday of each month. Email: renaissancelsv@hotmail.org. Website: www.ren.org. Voice: 717.780.1578.

Susquehanna Valley Bears - PO BOX 61478, Harrisburg, PA 17106-1478. Website:: www.svbears.com, Email: svbears@svbears.com

Susquehanna Club -
Recreation/Camping. Membership organization. Website: www.susq.org, Email: camp@susq.org. Contact the Switchboard for more information.

Womyn's Chorus of Central PA
- Social - Regular rehearsals every Monday night at 7 PM. We need YOUR voice and spirit. Email info@cpwchorus.org. Website: www.cpwchorus.org or call 717.234.4825.

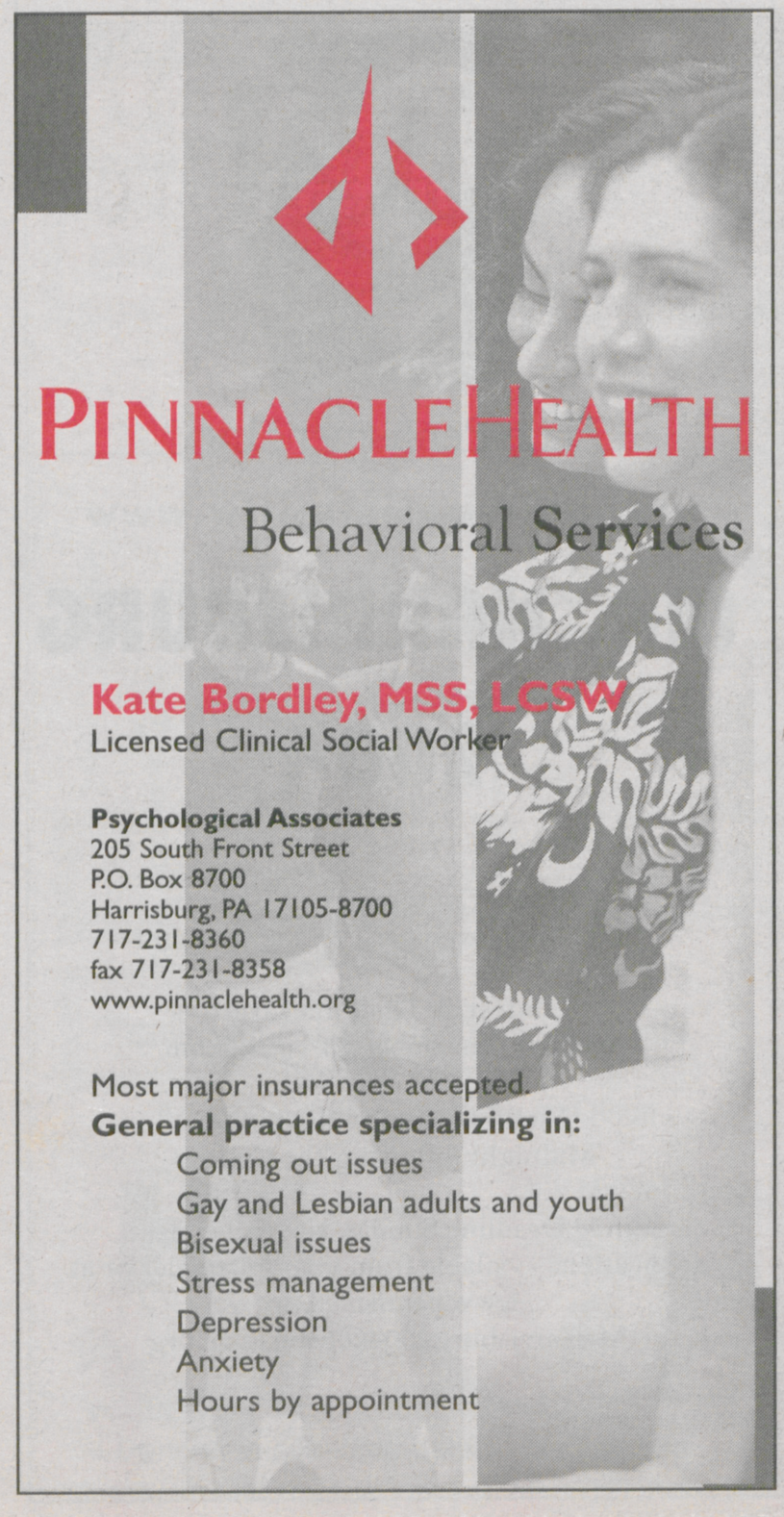
SUPPORT GROUPS

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg, Inc. - Phone helpline: (717)234.0328, M-F 6:30 p.m. – 9 p.m. Some weekend support. Website: www.AskGLSH.org. Email: info@AskGLSH.org. 1300A North 3rd St. Harrisburg, PA 17102.

Lambda AA – Harrisburg -
Support group for recovering lesbian and gay alcoholics using 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Quaker Meeting House. 6th and Herr Sts. Lower level. (717)234-5390. Hours: Mon 8 p.m. and Fri 8:30 p.m.

Parents and Families, Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) of Central Pennsylvania - Support for GLBT families, friends, resources, publications, information from National office & small library. Meets 3rd Monday of each

continued on page17



Vision of Hope MCC Church Launches New Worship Service

Vision of Hope MCC Church, Mountville, recently launched an exciting new worship service

The church recognizes that there are different spiritual needs within the lgbt community and now will begin offering a more "contemplative" style service.

Currently, the church offers two worship services on Sundays. A contemporary worship service is held at 10:30 a.m. and includes dynamic praise music. An evening service is held at 6 p.m. and focuses on prayer ministry and includes the full gifts of the spirit.

In addition to two Sunday services, the church also offers a children's Sunday school program is offered at 10:30 a.m. and, according to church officials, is growing by leaps and bounds.

While attendance at the more traditional 10:30 a.m. and the 6 p.m. services has been increasing in the last year, the church also recognizes that there are different spiritual needs within the lgbt community. Recognizing the different needs of their community and congregation, the church added a new service at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings. The new service reflects a more "contemplative" approach and includes more time for quiet prayer and reflection.

The first new contemplative service will take place on Sunday, November 23 at 8:30 a.m.

In addition, Vision of Hope is holding a Thanksgiving Day Service at 10:30 a.m. on November 27, which will be followed by Thanksgiving Dinner. Christmas services also will include a 5 p.m. Christmas Eve children's service, followed by an 11 p.m. candlelight service.

Vision of Hope MCC is a member of the denomination known as the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

Lesbian Experiences: Living in a Small Town

By Edie Kelly

Note: Readers are encouraged to write down their thoughts and experiences. The article may be signed with your first and last name, your first name only or "anonymous." Send them to PosOps@aol.com.

First, let me preface this article by saying my daughter is a beautiful young woman of 16 who has strong values, understands others' feelings, and shows a sincere level of compassion. OK, sometimes she is self-absorbed, lazy and rude. So are all teenagers at times.

She has come to understand and promote my defiance for prejudice and has a theory on partner choices that we love a person, not a gender. As her lesbian mother, I am not sure I totally agree with that theory, but I respect her thoughts. My partner and I have given her our own words of wisdom: Kiss a woman before you marry. That being said, I will continue.

Being an out, proud lesbian living in a small, closed-minded town and having a teenage daughter of Asian descent challenges lots of people around me. In a moment of exasperation, my daughter informed me one day that her life was hell: She is Asian, adopted and has two gay parents. Her father and I lived in the closet and are now very close friends. I honestly understood why she was upset and proceeded to tell her how unique her family was. I assured her she would mature into an open-minded, well-rounded adult. I knew what I said was true — at least, I hoped it would be true — but I understood what she was saying.

Since I have come out after being married twice, I find it difficult to thrive in this community; especially after living a heterosexual lifestyle that denied my "coupling" was OK. I look forward to the gay bar outings where we can be ourselves. My first PrideFest was like opening a candy store to a diabetic and saying "Feast, my child." I was totally amazed at same-sex couples actually crossing a public street in Harrisburg holding hands.

So, after four years of living this lifestyle in small town America, I have learned to survive. I removed the small rainbow decal on my car window because I was told with my profession it was probably "not a good idea." I replaced it with a license plate frame of rainbow palm trees, which is very inconspicuous. I have refrained from putting the vivid rainbow colored license plate on the front of my car, mostly so as not to alert my daughter's friends that her mother is indeed a lesbian. Without that neon rainbow on the front of my full size SUV, who would ever suspect that the woman with the short, choppy haircut, army green cargo pants and a baseball cap could be a lesbian?

When at the local mall, I wander into Victoria's Secret and glance at the lacy thongs and lingerie only to confuse anyone in my daughter's crowd lurking about — oh, if only there were a "Dykes R Us" store!

When we enter a restaurant in our town, I closely watch my daughter scope the room as if she has that "deer in headlights" look. Sometimes, one of her friends, Jennifer, Jessica or Amber, is there. So my partner and I sit on opposite sides of the table.

My partner and I are very careful, when walking to our cars, not to kiss each other when leaving for work in the morning. We try not to look at each other longingly or lovingly in public or argue like a married couple. We both have learned to respect

continued on page 15

Midtown Harrisburg Booklovers: Open Air Book Fair Nov. 1

The corner of Third and Reily Streets in midtown Harrisburg just got better, as a cosmopolitan critical mass continues to evolve. With the fall opening of Midtown Scholar Bookstore (1519 N. Third St.) and Ted L. Canaday's Old & Rare Books (306 Reily St.) in Harrisburg's burgeoning Midtown District, book lovers now have a focal point for finding cool used books.

The two new establishments join The Center for Women's Creative Expression, Midtown Cinema and Vietnamese Garden Restaurant in and around Third and Reily streets. Harrisburg Area Community College's Center for Arts & Technology and The Seitz Gallery are also nearby, as well as the Broad Street Market.

"Harrisburg is more cosmopolitan than ever. We're creating a critical mass of books, art, culture, technology and independent film here in midtown for both neighborhood residents and for the larger East and West Shore folks," said Canaday. He spent 10 years in the Marine Corps before opening the bookstore with his wife Tai.

Both shops are planning an "open air book fair" for Nov. 1 on the corner of Third and Reily Streets. On that day, Midtown Scholar will unveil an outside wall mural painted by local, uptown artist Stephen Fieser.

Each shop has its own specialization. For example, Canaday stacks antiquarian books, first editions and rare maps, along with used books in all fields. He has collections strong on history and classical literature, as well as sections on politics, science and technology, regional military history, art and children's books. His books are 80 percent hardcover. The rest are trade paperback and range in price from $4 to as much as $12,000. "I have 12,000 books on site and another 5,000 in storage," Canaday said.

His bookstore sits right next to Vietnamese Garden Restaurant and occupies two floors. Warm tones and finished surfaces pull you right into the space, especially the upstairs table and chairs. The establishment also offers made-right-there Thai cuisine prepared by Canaday's wife Tai in authentic Isaan style.

"We have call-ahead catering for parties or a relaxing dinner for two. Our menu will rotate often," said Canaday. Hours are 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday; 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday; and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Call 717.233.6911 for more information.

In a classy makeover of existing space, Midtown Scholar couches itself in a former U.S. Post Office building. The upper floor is filled with used and very reasonably priced books. The lower level, which will officially open Nov. 1, is storage space for other holdings not on the shelf. "We plan to add new books about twice every month so the experience of coming here stays fresh with customers," said Catherine Lawrence, who owns the shop with husband Eric Papenfuse.

Midtown Scholar specializes in a lot of out-of-print and academic textbooks offered in hardcover, trade paperback and used condition. They stock a gay and lesbian section, as well as sections on the arts, history and world studies, science and religion, education and reference, American history and local history. Prices range from $5-$20 for books, or about 40 to 50 percent of the list price.

"We have 15,000 books in the shop and a total of 50,000 online that readers can search through at ," Lawrence said. Book inquires are accepted at 717.236.1680 or . The store was named one of "America's Greatest Independent bookstores" in 2002, reflecting their strong Internet activity before opening in their new space.

Lesbian Experiences continued

my daughter's feelings and her fears of peer disapproval and harassment.

When we happen to be out to dinner with her father and his partner, I try not make introductions like this is my ex-husband, our daughter, my partner and my ex-husband's partner. Besides earning us a look that could win us the "dysfunctional family of the year award," I must respect my daughter.

And to end this story of living in a small town and being a lesbian with a teenager: I must say in my next life I truly want to be lesbian, discover myself before gray hair covers my head and live in Provincetown!

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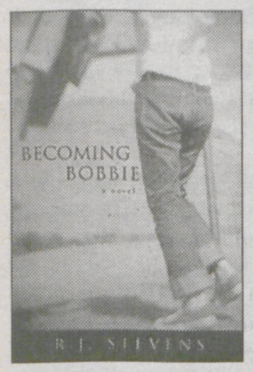
BOOK Review

Information provided by Forever Books, 41 N. Front Street, Steelton (939-5507), central PA's only gay & lesbian bookstore.



Becoming Bobbie

by R.J. Stevens
R.J. Stevens tells the emotionally-resonant story of a young tomboy whose love for her beautiful English teacher starts her on a life-altering odyssey of self-discovery, on a redemptive search for love, for a place in the world, and for a space within that feels like home... where becoming Bobbie means everything about being herself.

The Martian Child: A Novel About a Single Father Adopting a Son

by David Gerrold
Gerrold, a Nebula and Hugo Award winner, proffers this tale of adoption and fatherly love for the adoptive parents of troubled children. David, decides that he wants to be "a dad" and initiates adoption procedures through the California bureacracy. He stumbles upon a photograph of eight-year-old Dennis, a boy abandoned by a alcoholic mother as a baby. Although David has not counted on having a "problem child" for a son, he eagerly embraces the idea.

It's in Her Kiss

by Elizabeth Dean
Heading up a staff of writers at a fledgling lesbian network seems like a dream come true for good-hearted, hard working C.J. Jansen. Too bad the network in run by C.J.'s ex-lover, Debbie Lee, aka The Dragon Lady - a woman who would happily use the rainbow flag to strangle someone for a bad creative idea. The last thing C.J. needs at this crazy job is a romance, but that's just what she gets!

How I Learned to Snap: A Small-Town Coming-Out and Coming-Of-Age Story

by Kirk Read
Journalist and performer Kirk read takes readers on a guided tour of his precocious and courageous adolescence. Recalling his years as an openly gay high school student, Read describes how he navigated the hallways with his sense of humor and dignity intact.

Thank you
from Common Roads!

For your generosity and enthusism, for your kindness and restraint, for your grace under fire and selfless giving of your time, Common Roads thanks everyone who helped make our "Jim in Bold" fundraiser successful!

In the beginning, we thought showing the movie would be a small event intended to make enough money to keep our doors open and to match a program grant. Thanks to everyone who cares, the event evolved into a "big" event unifying the LGBTQ, the straight, and the religious communities throughout central Pennsylvania.

We know it's impossible to thank everyone by name, but our feelings of gratitude are no less strong. From the Drag Queens to the bar owners, to the movie goers and the event planners, Common Roads thanks you for your kind support.

Thank you

The State Museum of Pennsylvania
The Pennsylvania State Police
Harrisburg City Police
The Brownstone, an event Sponsor
Kirk Baney, Chair, Pride Festival of Central PA
Rey Lacaba, Vice Chair, Pride festival of Central PA
Mark-Carrol Regal
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Anne van Dyke, PA Human Relations Commission
Claire Jones, President, NAACP Greater Harrisburg Branch
Temple Beth Shalom (Reconstructionist)
Pastor Russ Meuller
Rabbi Peter Kessler, Temple Ohev Shalom (Reform)
Reverand Duane Fickeisen
Malcolm Lazin, Executive Producer, "Jim in Bold"
Susan Wheeler, Jim Wheeler's Mother
The Common Roads Youth Group, Flag Bearers, and all-around-helpers
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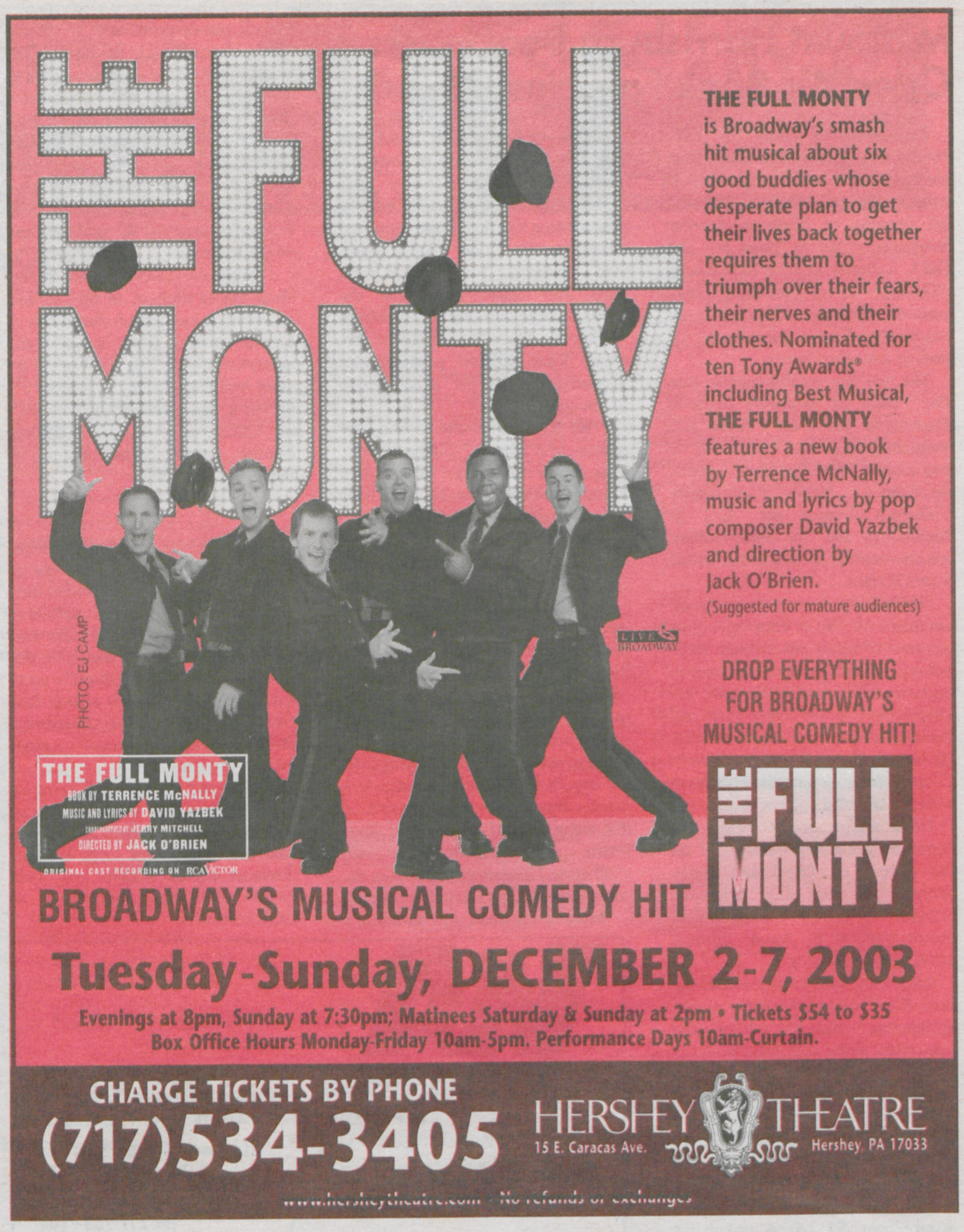
THE FULL MONTY
PHOTO: EJ CAMP
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MUSIC AND LYRICS BY DAVID YAZBEK
CHOREOGRAPHED BY JERRY MITCHELL
DIRECTED BY JACK O'BRIEN
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LGBT "Forever Books" Opens

Tameca Waid and Monique Pearson, co-owners and partners, recently opened "Forever Books", 41 N. Front Street, Steelton (939-5507). Located across from the Turkey Hill on the main drag, the gay and lesbian bookstore is open seven days a week. Monday-Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m.

Forever Books starts Alternative Central's new Book Review Section on page XX. Also read about Harrisburg's two new bookstores, one with a gay and lesbian section, on page 15.

They've devoted 900 square feet to used and new books. The space is filled with bookcases built by a local artist on his way to a New York City audition with R&B/Rap artist Russell Simmons.

Bookstores sections include: coming out, non-fiction autobiography, queer sci-fi, women's studies. "Eventually, we'll be adding African-American selections for men and women and Latino and Latina sections," Monique says. "Gay people from the community have already been donating their used books," Monique says, encouraging others to do the same.

General prices for used books will range from half off for paperback books and healthy discounts on hard cover editions. New books will be priced at market value. "We'll have something for all price ranges," Tameca says.

Forever Books will keep a Community Resource section onsite. Their space is also available as free meeting space for lgbt groups. "Eventually, we hope to sponsor trips to gay and lesbian campsites and some other kinds of inexpensive field trips," Tameca says. "The neighborhood senior citizen center has already asked about a

continued on page 18

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg, Inc.

AskGLSH.org

Hours: M-F 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

717.234.0328

Get Connected to your Community

Community Calendar

Let everyone know your events! AC publishes information on events free of charge. Please have your events posted on the form provided at *info@askglsh.org* by the 6th of the month prior to the publication of the next issue. AC is published every other month beginning in January.

November 08, 2003
Pennsmen Bar Night Social/10:00 p.m. - Join the Pennsmen for a night of brotherhood and leather fun at the Neptune Lounge from 10pm to midnight. The Neptune Lounge, 268 North Street Harrisburg, PA 17101

November 09, 2003
Sweet Honey in the Rock with Toshi Reagon & Big Lovely/2:00 p.m. - Celebrate their 30th year together as Sweet Honey in the Rock. Concert at the Kimmel Center, Verizon Hall, Phila. More information at www.kimmelcenter.org or 215-893-1999.

Pennsmen Monthly meeting/5:00 p.m. - Anyone interested in the clubs activities are welcome to attend. 704 Strawberry, 704 N. Third Street Harrisburg, PA 17101. Contact: Steven James at 717-232-3785, email: pennsmen@pennsmen.org. Website: www.pennsmen.org.

November 14, 2003
Pink Lizard: The Quitters Band/9 p.m.-12 p.m. - Fantastic local band, one of the clubs favorites. A Must See!! Pink Lizard Night Club, 891 Eisenhower Blvd. Harrisburg, 717 939-1123, email:Pinklizard891@aol.com.

November 18, 2003
COOTIE SHOTS/7:00 p.m. - **Theatrical Inoculations Against Bigotry for Kids, Parents and Teachers**. Adapted from the book by Norma Bowles and Mark E. Rosenthal, COOTIE SHOTS will be a touring production by Open Stage of Harrisburg available in Spring and Fall of 2004. The public is invited free of charge to the pilot presentation of this new weapon in the war against bigotry. Open Stage of Harrisburg. Free Contact: Jane Bixler at 717. 214-3250. Email: management@openstagehbg.com. Website: www.openstagehbg.com

November 19, 2003
Gay and Lesbian Switchboard Monthly Meeting/7:00 p.m. Meeting Room. 2004 Elections. 1300 A North Third Street -. Contact the Switchboard at 717.234.0328. Email: info@AskGLSH.org, Website: www.AskGLSH.org

November 21, 2003
Pink Lizard: Evening of Illusion – Drag Show/10:00 p.m. Come out and watch your favorite female impersonators perform Ito, Starr Powers, Biscuit, Poison, Ingenue and Coco Vega from Ohio. Best show around!! Call for reservations. Pink Lizard Night Club, 891 Eisenhower Blvd. Harrisburg. 717 939-1123, Email: Pinklizard891@aol.com

Susquehanna Club – Camping - Harper's Ferry, WV. In Gapland, MD - Located at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers in the states of West Virginia, Virginia, and Maryland; throughout its history, Harpers Ferry has been the backdrop for remarkable and unparalleled events. Here, in one setting, several themes in the American story converge: Native Americans, industry and transportation, African-Americans, John Brown, the Civil War, and the natural environment. Rustic treehouse cabins with wood stoves. November 21-23. Members $50 Non-Members $55. Email: info@susq.org. Website: www.susq.org.

November 22, 2003
Meet The Contestants/Meet the men competing for Mr. Harrisburg 2004!/Midnight Come out and meet the men who will be competing for the title of Mr. Harrisburg 2004 at midnight on the dance floor at Stallions! 706 N. Third Street Harrisburg, Contact: Jesse at 717-232-3785, email: pennsmen@pennsmen.org. Website: www.pennsmen.org.

8th Annual FAB Event w/Comedian Suzanne Westenhoefer/7:00 p.m. Strand Capitol, York. The 8th annual FAB event will be held on November 22, 2003 and will feature special entertainment by Suzanne Westenhoefer. The event will be held at the newly renovated Strand Capitol Theater in York and will be catered by Accomac Catering. Proceeds benefit the g/l/b/t/organizations serving the Central Pennsylvania community. Contact The Greater Harrisburg Foundation at 717-236-5040. Tickets: $65-$125.

November 23, 2003
Mr. Harrisburg 2004 - Competition for the Next Mr. Harrisburg/8:00 p.m. Mr. Harrisburg 2004 will be held at the Pink Lizard Night Club @ 8:00pm. This is a preliminary to Mr. Pennsylvania USA. To be contestant visit our website at www.pennsmen.org. Contact: Jesse Perry-James. 717-232-3785.

November 26, 2003
Pink Lizard: Hugh Pre-Thanksgiving Day Party/7:00 p.m. Hey don't miss one of the biggest parties of the year. While everyone is home for the holiday come out for great giveaways, lots of drink specials and you favorite DJ spinning tunes at 9PM. This party is a must, DONT miss out! FREE, FREE, FREE. Pink Lizard Night Club, 891 Eisenhower's Blvd. Harrisburg. 717 939-1123. Email: pinklizard891@aol.com

November 28, 2003
Biscuit Christmas Fundraiser Drag Show – Lets Help a Needy Family/10:00 p.m. This show will be benefiting some local families who very much need out help. We will be buying toys for their kids, and much needed food and clothing for the families. Come out and help support a great cause!! What a better way to kick off the holidays!! Lots of great entertainment. Pink Lizard Night Club, 891 Eisenhower Blvd., Harrisburg. 717 939-1123.

December 3, 2003
Female Impersonator, Christopher Peterson "Christmas Show"/9:30. Tickets for any show may be purchased in person or over the phone using a major card by calling The Velvet Rope. $15 Reserved, $10 General Admission. Tickets are also available at the door. The Velvet Rope Nighclub, York, PA. 717-812-1474. www.clubvelvetrope.com

December 5, 2003
Cris Williamson & Holly Near/8:00 p.m. Hear these two in concert at the Keswick Theatre in Glenside, PA. $24.50. Website: www.keswicktheatre.com

Pink Lizard: Dauphin County Illusion Pageant/9:00 p.m. Anyone interested in running for this pageant please contact Alexxuskane@aol.com for information. This will not only be a wonderful pageant, but there will be fantastic entertainment as well. For reservations call the Pink Lizard. 891 Eisenhower Blvd. Harrisburg 717 939 1123. Pinklizard891@aol.com

December 5-28, 2003
A CHRISTMAS CAROL - The holiday classic/7:00 PM, Thurs-Sat; 2:30 PM, Sundays Open Stage's production of A CHRISTMAS CAROL is a holiday tradition for the whole family, whatever your family is. Adapted by Edward Alsedek from the story by Charles Dickens. Open Stage of Harrisburg. Adults $18.00-$22.00; Children 12 and under $12.00. Call 232-6736 for tickets. Contact: Rob Greenfield at 232-6736 email: management@openstagehbg.com. website: www.openstagehbg.com

December 12, 2003
Marilyn Eckley & Voodoo Love Hounds/9:00 p.m. Listen, if you missed their last performance. Don't miss this one. This is a fantastic blues, jazz, and great funky band! Marilyn sings with such ease. Last time the crowd yelled for more and more. THIS PERFORMANCE IS A MUST! Call for your reservations ASAP. Pink Lizard Night Club, 891 Eisenhower Blvd, Harrisburg. 717 939-1123. Email: pinklizard891@aol.com

December 14, 2003
Pennsmen Monthly meeting/5:00 p.m. Anyone interested in the activities of the club are welcome to attend. 704 Strawberry, 704 N. Third Street Harrisburg, PA 17101. Contact: Steven James at 717-232-3785. Email: pennsmen@pennsmen.org. Website: www.pennsmen.org

December 17, 2003
.Gay and Lesbian Switchboard Monthly Meeting/7:00 p.m. 1300 A North Third St Meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. 717.234.0328.

December 19, 2003
Pink Lizard: Evening of Illusion - Drag Show/10:00 p.m. Come out for a great night of female impersonation. Your local cast members will dazzle you with their performances and there will be a special out of town guest!. Enjoy the last show of 2003...Call for reservations. Pink Lizard Night Club, 891 Eisenhower Blvd., Harrisburg. 717 939-1123 Email: pinklizard891@aol.com

Reminder: Organizations listed in the community resources section are required to submit updates whenever changes occur. Submit changes to the Switchboard via Email: info@AskGLSH.org or call 717.234.0328.

Support Groups continued

month except August and December. Email: pflagcenpa@yahoo.com, Tressler/DIAKON: Voice: (717)795.0330. 24-hr hotlineL717)728.8800.

Parents and Families, Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) of York. Meets monthly at 7 p.m., Lutheran Home. 750 Kelly Drive, York, PA. For more information call (717)843.3793 or (717)846.2560.

The Quest Group – a supportive, loving spiritual community for gays, lesbians and those who love them that promotes an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance and provides an opportunity to know each other through God and to know God through each other. This is a social group also. Meets the second and fourth Fridays of the month. Unity Church of Harrisburg. Enola, PA. (717)975-2028.

Rainbow AA of York (Gay and Lesbian AA). Meets Thursday and Saturday at 8 p.m. Trinity Lutheran, 415 N. West St. York. For more information (717)846.2560 or Email: chuckdk@aol.com

Beat Winter Blues with Group Ski Trips

Soon snow will be flying. The first day of ski season is near.

As the white accumulates, the Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg (GLSH) has the perfect alternative to the winter blues. Skiers and snowboarders of all levels are welcome to join GLSH's ski outings at some of the region's best skiing spots.

"GLSH will be organizing group ski nights and day trips to Elk Mountain, Camelback, Blue Mountain, and to the local ski areas; Ski Roundtop, Ski Liberty and Whitetail," says GLSH president Charlie Smith.

Also check out IGLOO's Winter Rendezvous, Feb 5-9, at Stowe, Vermont. Organized by several regional gay and lesbian outdoors groups, this intimate ski event returns to Stowe for a full range of snow sports including downhill and cross-country skiing, ice skating, snowshoe racing, snow boarding, sledding and ice climbing, as well as horseback riding, dancing, parties, name entertainment, cookouts and excursions to the Top Notch Spa.

Past IGLOO events have drawn about 250 participants, primarily from the Northeast. This is a great event for getting to know everyone else participating. Information and reservations information is available from:

IGLOO (www.gayskieast.org, info@gayskieast.org). Note that the event registration fee usually rises after January 1.

If you would like to know what's going and for the most up-to-date information contact the Switchboard at 717.234.0328, or email at info@AskGLSH.org.

Trip details and costs will be posted at www.AskGLSH.org and in Alternative Central. Advance reservations and deposits are required.

PA Capitol Connection: Pending & Recently Introduced LGBT Legislation

Complied from Staff Reports, the following legislation is in varying states of development and sponsorship in the overall political process on Capitol Hill.

SB 278 (C. Williams, D-Montgomery) would establish the Office of Women's Health within the PA Department of Health, the purpose of which, among other functions, to serve as a clearinghouse and resource of information regarding women's health data, strategies, services and programs that address women's health issues, including, but not limited to heart disease, cancer, AIDS, osteoporosis, meenopause, mental health, reproductive health, STDs and teenage pregnancies.

SB 314 (Greenleaf, R-Montgomery) would amend the Crimes Code to cause a person to be charges with a third degree felony when he or she "is knowingly HIV positive or manifesting AIDS" and engages in sexual intercourse or shares a hypodermic needle with a complaintant, or knowingly donates, sells or attempts to do so blood, components or any other body fluid or tissue with the intent to expose another to AIDS or HIV, transmission of the virus notwithstanding.

SB 608 (Hughes, D-Philadelphia) would add the terms, "familial status, sex, sexual orientation" and "gender identity or expression" to the prohibition of discriminatory practices by employers, employment agencies, labor organizations and others.

SB 609 (Hughes, D-Philadelphia) would add the terms, "class, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression" to the list of prohibited of discrimination in educational practices.

SB 706 (Conti, R-Bucks) would add the terms "sexual orientation" and "gender identity or expression" to the list of prohibited discriminatory practices by employers, employment agencies, labor organizations and others.

SB 707 (Conti, R-Bucks) would add the terms "sexual orientation" and "gender identity or expression" to the list of prohibited discrimination in educational practices.

SR 25 (Hughes, D-Philadelphia) recognized February 7, 2003 as National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day."

SR 52 (Orie, R-Allegheny) would recognize youth mental illness and suicide as a state public health crisis and encourage evidence-based initiatives to screen children and adolescents for mental disorders in order to identify illness and prevent suicide among youth.

HB 646 (Frankel, D-Allegheny) would establish the Prevention of Hate Activity Fund to be administered by the PA Human Realtions Commission and would appropriate $1 million for FY 2003-04.

HB 713 (Travaglio, D-Westmoreland) would establish public State Health Centers at each County seat to ensure that residents may receive basic health care services including, but not limited to STD testing and counseling in the event of bioterrorism.

HR 200 (Bebko-Jones, D-Erie) would recognize youth mental illness and suicide as a state public health crisis and encourage evidence-based initiatives to screen children and adolescents for mental disorders in order to identify illness and prevent suicide among youth.

HR 341 (Josephs, D-Philadelphia) recognized June 27, 2003 as "National HIV Testing Day."

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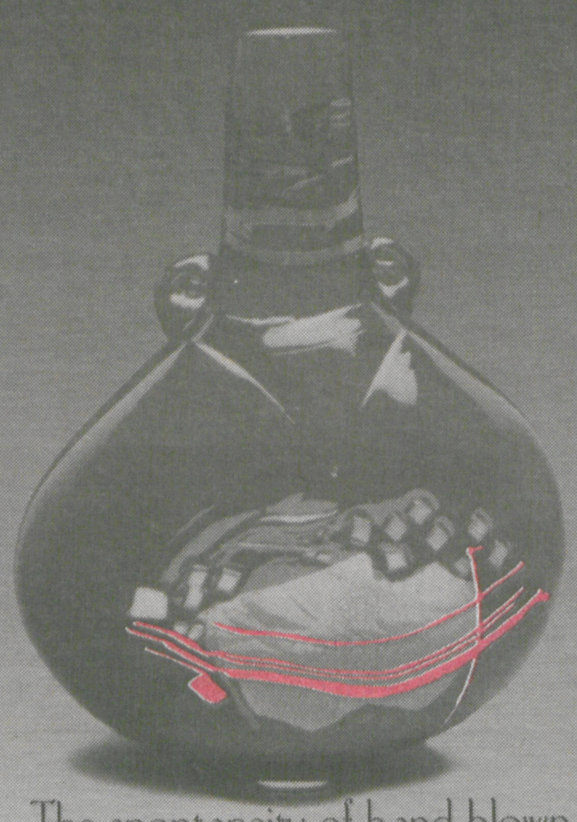

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Jim in Bold Forged Unlikely Allies - A Look Back

"When Fred Phelps' group pulled American flags from their duffle bags and proceeded to tramp on them, right there on the sidewalk, holding signs that said 'Thank God for 9/11' and 'God Destroyed the Space Shuttle', I knew for sure these people were from Mars," said one man attending the late September screening of "Jim in Bold".

Another person said the eyes of a gay Vietnam Veteran turn sad at the sight of Phelps' children stepping all over the American flag. "There he was having fought for his country and having to witness this scene."

After weeks of intense planning, the event, some feared may turn ugly, drew several hundred gay and lesbian central Pennsylvania residents and their supporters. They ringed the museum's plaza with "God is Love" signs in silent witness to Phelps' hate message.

"What did we learn now that it's over?" asks Carol Reisinger, executive director of Common Roads, the regional gay youth support group that sponsored the film as a fund raiser.

"We learned that most people will not tolerate unreasoned hate, and resent it coming to their community," Reisinger says, reflecting on the event. "They do not want to see young people hurt by those who refuse to consider how devastating their words can be on young people," she points out.

Reisinger said she also learned how "powerful this community can be when we stand together against those who would destroy us with their hate." She found "allies in places we never expected to find them, like with some of the main stream churches and other groups."

She further adds that "we also learned that there are some who are destructive and ready to condemn and who continue to celebrate hate. We learned that stereotypical myths do not go away without education."

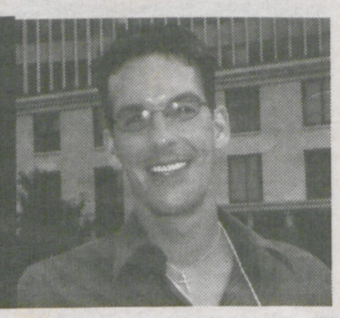
The region learned that although not all organized religions are ready to fully embrace homosexuality – and have a list of positions that look more like a continuum than a united policy – they all agree that "hate" is wrong. Consequently, several local congregations sent legions of representatives to hold "God is love" signs in silent witness to the "Day of Unity" held prior to the screening of the movie about a young man who commits suicide in the midst of a nagging, conservative community.

Several congregations sent formal messages that were read aloud from the podium. One of those congregations, in Lebanon, was targeted for a small demonstration by Phelps' group earlier the day of the Harrisburg event.

They learned that the region's African-American community quickly understood the hurtful impact of devastating "hate" messages to the community. Clare Jones, president of the NAACP, Greater Harrisburg Branch, spoke of the need for acceptance and understanding.

Reisinger thinks the bigger question is: "What happens next and how do we continue to move forward?" She wants to find ways to continue educating the greater community. "How do we unite all the players with an interest in doing this so that we do not get bogged down in internal politics and can move forward at the same time," she asks. She also struggles with where and how to find money and personnel to continue. "How do we sustain the interest generated by the Unity Day and by Jim in Bold," she asks.

Common Roads executive director Carol Reisinger on the "Day of Unity" held prior to screening of "Jim in Bold" at Pennsylvania State Museum.



PrideFest president Kirk Baney was up early for recent "Day of Unity" program. Under the leadership of PrideFest Vice President Rey Lacaba, PrideFest was the lead group in organizing the successful event.

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"Forever Books" continued

field trip to our new book store," Monique says.

Art work for sale by Harrisburg artist Tina Fields is on display November and December. "We'd like more men involved as artists in our bookstore. We want ideas for poetry night, open mike themes, and ideas for a social group. You suggest it, we'll consider it," (Send ideas to info@foreverbooks.biz.)

Tameca was born in the Steelton area and Monique is a New York girl. "I can't tell you how many times I've run into people from my old neighborhood, including my fifth grade teacher," Monique says. Two children later, 13-year-old girl and a 10-year-old boy, they own the region's first gay and lesbian bookstore.

Monique fell in love with Tameca partly because of her love of books. "My grandmother wrote children's stories, but never published," Tameca says. Her daughter, Tanesha, writes poetry. Tameca comes from a reading family with a strong interest in arts and crafts. "Our house is book-friendly house," Monique says. She often passes through her house and sees everyone quietly reading.

If half the activities planned by co-owners Tameca and Monique, Front Street in Steelton will be anything but quiet.

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg, inc. Alternative CENTRAL

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Business card advertisements can be place in Market Place for three issues at the cost of $85.00. Please contact Benchmark Media for business card placement. See page 3 for Benchmark Media contact information. ALL advertisements must be received by the 6th of the month prior to the publication of the next issue. AC is published every other month beginning in January and unconditionally reserves the right to reject any advertisement.

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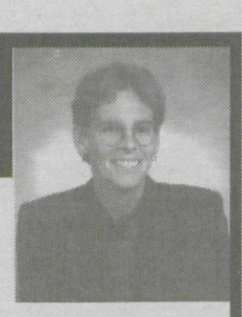

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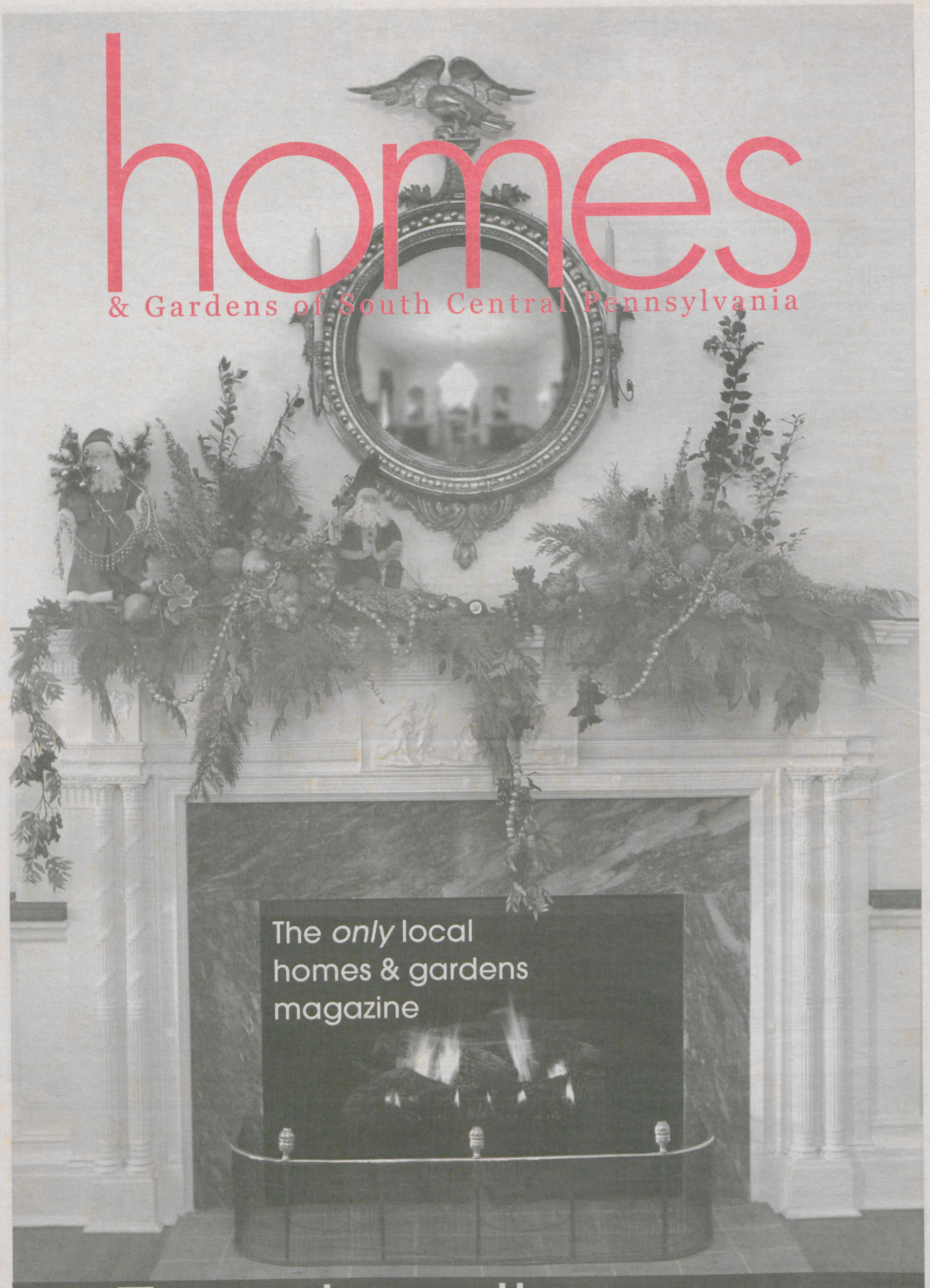

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